

# **IOWA BIRD LIFE**

**IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION**



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## IOWA BIRD LIFE

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*The Iowa Ornithologists' Union, founded in 1923, encourages interest in the identification, study, and protection of birds in Iowa and seeks to unite those who have these interests in common. Iowa Bird Life and IOU News are quarterly publications of the Union.*

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# Meet an Iowa Birder – Karen Disbrow

*Rick Hollis*



*Karen Disbrow, Hawkeye WA, Johnson, 7 September 2014.  
Photograph by Richard Hollis.*

It is safe to say that no other member of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union (IOU) has stood in front of its displays more than Karen Disbrow. She has taken our display all over eastern Iowa to festivals, workshops, and meetings where she enjoys telling people all about birds and the IOU. Counting IOU meetings, where one of the displays serves as a backdrop for the IOU store, she conservatively estimates she has done this 80 times!

Karen was born in Decatur, Illinois where she grew up on the family farm that was purchased in 1862. She recognized Northern Bobwhites and Ring-necked Pheasants calls at an early age. The farm was in central Illinois and was prairie, so the only trees were in yards or along rivers or creeks, none of which were close. Her grandfather, E.B. 'Ben' Disbrow loved birds and tried to teach Karen to recognize bird calls. There are pictures of her grandfather with owls and stories of her uncle shooting and wounding a hawk, and later bringing it to her grandfather to rehabilitate. Karen's grandfather would not allow hunting on his farm so her father, Charles, had to travel to hunt pheasants.

Karen attended Eastern Illinois University and received a B.S. in Botany and a B.S. Environmental Biology in 1976; she received a M.S. in Botany there in 1978. Karen moved to Iowa in 1982, while working for Stauffer Seeds. She obtained a second M.S. degree in Environmental Science from the College of Engineering at the University of Iowa. While working on her M.S. degree, she spent a good bit of time at Lakeside Lab, studying aquatic ecology.

As an adult, important birding influences were Bud Gode, Carol Thompson, and Rick Hollis. She attended her first IOU meeting at Davenport in spring 1989. She traveled with Bud, Carol, and Rick in Carol's Volkswagen bus, camping at Scott County Park. The all night Eastern Whip-poor-will serenade was great experience. The many IOU meetings Karen attended, traveling with this group, provided some of her best birding memories. Before coming to this meeting, Karen bought her first binoculars right before she left Iowa

City for Davenport. The leader of the first IOU field trip Karen attended was Jim Sinclair. Karen had some issues focusing on the birds. Jim asked her how long she had had her binoculars; although embarrassed, she told him she had purchased them the day before. The rest of that trip she had lots of hands-on help from Jim and other veteran IOU members.

Karen has served on the IOU Membership Committee since 2003. After Hank and Linda Zaletel ask to be relieved of the IOU Store, Karen took it over. Since then, she took IOU materials and displays the Midwestern Birding Conference held in the Quad Cities and many places in Iowa. Karen is on the Board of Iowa Audubon. In 2010 Iowa Audubon needed a new location for their annual Pelican Festival. Karen coordinated with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Iowa City Bird Club (ICBC) to bring the festival to the Hawkeye Wildlife Management Area, where it has been held since 2011. In 2011 Karen co-founded the Turkey Vulture Festival at the Coralville Dam with Terry Escher, Natural Resource Specialist with the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers. In 2013 the Corps wanted a Bald Eagle event so Karen and Terry came up with the Bald Eagle Watch and Expo, held annually since 2013. Karen takes the IOU display to all of these events.

About ten years ago, Karen learned that James Huntington birded Hickory Hill Park almost daily in May. She had an idea for a regular birding walk, which later grew into the highly successful ICBC Hickory Hill Park Warbler Walks. They run on weekdays for nearly a month and are led by different local birders. In 2003 Karen called a meeting of the ICBC leadership to discuss a course for beginning birders. Several courses had been offered in Iowa City since the mid-1970s, led at various times by Mike Newlon, Rick Hollis, and Hollis and Margrietta Delle, but they had languished for several years. The following spring a class commenced again and it has been very successful. Some years there are only ten people but other years 20+ birders attend. Speakers have included Jim Scheib, Rick Hollis, Jerry White, James Huntington, Bob Dick, and Karen.

Karen's favorite birding locale so far is Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge in New Mexico, which she has visited two times. In Iowa, she probably birds Hawkeye Wildlife Area more than any other place. Every spring she looks forward to the arrival of all the songbirds. The top place on her wish list for future birding trips goes to the Rio Grande Valley of Texas. Karen keeps records but cannot tell you her life list total. Because of her many responsibilities, she rarely chases rarities but this past winter she went after Harlequin Duck on the Des Moines River in Des Moines and also to the Iowa State University Horticulture Farm to try for the Pine Grosbeak. She saw the Harlequin but missed the grosbeak. Karen readily admits that the IOU contains birders with greater identification skills than she, and many with life lists that are far larger, but challenges anyone to say they have more fun birding and at IOU meetings.

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# A Boreal Owl specimen from Northwestern Iowa

*Paul Hertzfel and Robert De Haan*



*Figure 1. Boreal Owl, February 2015, Dordt College Museum Collection, Sioux City, Woodbury, IA. Photo by Robert De Haan.*

In late winter or early spring of 2013, Dave Suter was walking a wooded area behind his home in Rock Valley, which is in northwestern Sioux County, Iowa. He came across the remains of a bird lying in the leaf litter. The remains were in good condition, and he could see it was an owl, but the markings struck him as unusual and he did not recognize the species. He took the bird to taxidermist Mike Wielenga in Sioux Center.

Mike informed Dave that neither he nor Dave were allowed by law to be in possession of an owl, or even the remains of an owl. Mike contacted the county naturalist's office to see if they had an interest in

the owl. He was told they did have an interest, so he set the specimen aside and waited. However, after a month or two had passed and no one came to pick up the owl, Mike contacted Dr. Robert De Haan who oversees the museum collection at Dordt College in Sioux Center. Dr. De Haan was interested in the specimen and it was transferred to his care in early summer 2013. Later in the summer of 2013, several students of Dr. De Haan retrieved the specimen from a freezer to examine it more closely. They identified it as a Boreal Owl and informed Dr. De Haan, who researched the species and agreed. At that point, he decided to have the specimen preserved rather than subject it to classroom study. On 24 January 2014, taxidermist Mike Wielenga received the Boreal Owl specimen from Dr. De Haan with instructions to mount it. Wielenga said the specimen was in good condition and there were no obvious injuries or indications of the cause of death. He completed the work in April 2014 and the bird was returned to De Haan who entered it into the collection at Dordt College.

This is the second modern record for Boreal Owl in Iowa, and the first known specimen. An individual was photographed 12 November 2004 at George Wyth State Park in Waterloo (Garrett 2005). There are a few unsubstantiated references from the 19th Century and early 20th Century (Richardson's Owl) that are summarized in Dinsmore et al. (1984).

The Boreal Owl is classified as regular in extreme northern Minnesota and occasionally wanders south in winter, sometimes reaching southern Minnesota.

We thank Don Poggensee for his help in constructing this record and Curt Nelson and Jim Dinsmore for suggestions and help with reference materials.

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# Field Reports—Winter 2014–2015

*Francis L Moore*



*Francis L. Moore*

## WEATHER

This winter season had above normal temperatures in December and January and below normal temperatures in February with below normal precipitation during the first two months and above normal precipitation during the last month of the season. There were several rain/snow events during December with the heaviest snowstorm starting on 31 January. The bulk of the precipitation in February fell as snow and came in two events.

The cold weather pattern that dominated the month of November persisted only into the first three days of December. Above normal temperatures prevailed on all but two days between the 4th and 28th. There were two prolonged periods averaging more than ten degrees warmer than normal from the 12th through the 15th and from the 21st through the 26th when

overnight low temperatures were frequently higher than typical daytime high readings. The month's highest temperatures of 60 degrees were recorded on the 14th at Shenandoah and Sidney. Subzero temperatures were confined to only 1 December, and again during the last four days of the month. Primghar and Sioux Center recorded the lowest temperatures of the month with -15 degree readings on the morning of the 30th while wind chills bottomed out at -33 degrees the same morning at Storm Lake. December began very dry with no measurable precipitation anywhere in the state until the 7th. Most of the month's precipitation came in two events. The first storm system brought light to moderate rain statewide from the 14th to the 16th with the rain changing to very light snow in the far northwest late in the event. The second event also brought light to moderate rain statewide between the 22nd and 24th before changing over to one to four inches of snow to the northwestern one-half of the state. One last event brought one to four inches of snow to the northwestern one-third of Iowa on the night of the 26th. The statewide average snowfall for the month was only 1.5 inches or 7.8 inches below normal. Monthly precipitation totals, coming mostly as rain, were above normal over most of northwestern Iowa but decreased to about one-half of normal over the far southeast. Saint Ansgar reported the most snow with 7.3 inches. This is the lowest December snow total since 2006 and 12th lowest among 128 years of records.

The month of January had a split personality for temperatures with most of the first

two weeks averaging below normal while the month finished with 17 consecutive warmer than normal days. Wind chill readings dipped below -30 degrees on the 4th, 6th, 7th, and 8th with the lowest reading of -35 degrees at Clarion. Actual temperatures bottomed out at -25 degrees at Cherokee on the morning of the 13th. However, the lowest temperature for the remainder of the month was 6 degrees above zero at Cresco on the 30th. Daytime highs reached into the 60s on the 16th (62 degrees at Clarinda, Red Oak and Shenandoah) and 28th (67 degrees at Shenandoah) over southwestern Iowa. The Shenandoah reading on the 28th was a record high for that date and location. The relatively dry weather pattern that has prevailed in Iowa since mid-October persisted until 31 January when Iowa's heaviest snow storm in five years arrived. This late month storm began with rain on the morning of the 31st with the rain gradually changing to snow during the afternoon and evening hours. Snow fell statewide before ending during the afternoon and evening of 1 February. Storm totals varied from 2.2 inches near Spirit Lake to 16.0 inches at Le Clair. Greatest amounts fell along and just north of the Interstate 80 corridor from Des Moines to the Quad Cities. A statewide average of 8.3 inches of snow fell across Iowa, the highest storm total since 23-27 December 2009. The largest precipitation event occurring entirely with January came on the 5th with widespread snowfall of four to six inches from northwestern to east-central Iowa. High winds combined with dry powdery snow to result in blizzard warnings being issued for parts of northern Iowa on the night of the 3rd and again on the 8th. The statewide average snowfall for the month was 6.3 inches. This is 1.4 inches below normal and ranks as the 53rd lowest January total among 128 years of records.

Cold weather was the rule for most of February as temperatures averaged above normal for only five days from the 6th to the 10th. The second half of the month was particularly cold as 7 of the final 11 days of February averaged more than twenty degrees below normal. The first very cold air mass of the month settled in on the morning of the 5th when temperatures fell to -25 degrees at Elkader with valley bottom temperatures falling to -23 degrees as far south as Centerville. The winter's lowest temperatures occurred on the last two days of the month with Stanley recording -30 degrees on the morning of the 27th with Elkader matching that reading the next morning. Elkader's reading was the nationwide low (Lower 48 states) on the 28th. A lower temperature has been recorded later in the winter season in Iowa only three times (1948, 1960, and 1962). The bulk of the month's precipitation fell as snow and came in two events. The largest event began on 31 January and continued into the evening of 1 February. Snow fell statewide with greatest amounts falling across central and east central Iowa with amounts up to 16.0 inches at Le Claire and 14.7 inches at Madrid. Another event on the 25th brought widespread 3 to 6 inch snow totals to the northeastern one-half of Iowa but only a dusting over the southwestern counties. Calmar reported the most snow with this event with 7.9 inches. Monthly snowfall totals varied from 5.1 inches at Sioux City to 20.0 inches at Hampton. The statewide average snowfall was 12.6 inches or 5.8 inches above normal. This ranks as the 11th snowiest February among 128 years of records.

Temperatures over the mid-winter months of December, January, and February averaged 12.2 degrees below normal while precipitation totaled 2.82 inches or 0.52 inches less than normal. This ranks as the 62nd coolest and 54th driest winter among 142 years of records.



## GENERAL TRENDS

Most waterfowl reports were from December and January with only a few reports in February. There were a large number of reports of Trumpeter Swan during the period that suggest this species is doing well in Iowa. Diving duck numbers were about average during the period with very few reports from the end of the period. It seems that the northbound migration was slow to get started again this year with a few records of single or very small numbers of most species that started in middle to late February but not in very high numbers.

Most gallinaceous bird numbers were still on the low side with only Wild Turkey showing average or above average totals. American White Pelicans were found in fairly high numbers at Red Rock Reservoir and at the lock and dams along the Mississippi River throughout the period. There was only one report of a February Turkey Vulture this year. Bald Eagles were found in good numbers along the Mississippi River and at the Army Corps of Engineers impoundments. Reports of *Accipiter's* were low this season with below average numbers of Sharp-shinned Hawks and a lower than usual number of Cooper's Hawks. Rough-legged Hawks seemed to be everywhere this year and were in greater than normal numbers. Northern Shrikes were found in good numbers statewide.

Most gull reports were during December and January this year with fewer being found during February. For northern owl species Snowy Owls were found in normal numbers again this year and there were good numbers of Northern Saw-whet Owls at the usual locations. Merlin were widespread this winter but only a few Peregrine Falcons were recorded. Red-headed Woodpecker was more numerous than usual this winter.

Good numbers of Horned Larks, Lapland Longspurs, and Snow Buntings were found during all three months, but mostly in northern and central Iowa. There were good numbers of Yellow-rumped Warblers found in the central and eastern parts of the state during most of the period. There were good numbers of wintering sparrows throughout the period. Winter finch numbers this winter were up from last year with reports of both species of crossbills along with good numbers of Common Redpolls and Pine Siskins. Eurasian Tree Sparrows continue to expand their range with singles found in Poweshiek, Benton, and Marion counties.

## UNUSUAL SPECIES

Casual and accidental species accepted by the records committee included Harlequin Duck, California Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Say's Phoebe, Bohemian Waxwing, and Pine Grosbeak.

## COMMENT

I really appreciate everyone going out and sending records from the field this season and submitting reports and providing material for this report. It was nice to see supporting details on some of the rarer species, in addition to the documentations that were submitted. Please continue to provide these details for rare species and for common species on unusual dates. Without this information some species cannot be included in the report and an important species might be left out of the records that should be included. Details can be a short brief physical description of the bird that would allow for separation from

any similar species. For many species, this can be one short sentence. It doesn't take much to point out the relevant features to give some confidence that the bird was seen well and properly identified. Please take the time to make yourself aware of when some of our species are out of season and take short notes to document such records.

Please continue entering your records into the IOU database so that they can be added to the archives and become a part of our long-term record. I have included some of the relevant records that were obtained from eBird reporters that were downloaded from the eBird database by Ann Johnson. This adds records to this report and hopefully gives us a better idea of statewide patterns.

## SPECIES DATA

ALL CAPS = Casual or Accidental. \* = documented, ph = photo. County names are in *italics*. Full names of contributors are at the end of the article. Abbreviations used: **ad** = adult, **CBC** = Christmas bird count, **imm** = immature, **juv** = juvenile, **L** = lake, **L&D** = lock and dam, **m.ob.** = many observers, **NWR** = national wildlife refuge, **P** = park, **RA** = recreation area, **Res** = reservoir, **R** = river, **SP** = state park, **SRA** = state recreation area, **WA** = wildlife area.

**Greater White-fronted Goose:** The largest number reported during the winter period was 460 on 26 Dec *Louisa* (KJM) and 262 on 2 Jan at Montrose *Lee* (eBird). Other reports were counts of 1 to 60 during January and February with the last being 60 on 3 Feb at an Otter Creek Yard *Louisa* (eBird).

**Snow Goose:** Highest numbers were 2,500 on 3 Dec and 2,250 on 16 Dec at Hitchcock Nature Area *Pottawattamie* (MOr), and 83 on 26 Dec *Louisa* (KJM).

**Ross's Goose:** All reports: 2 on 14 Dec at Goose L *Johnson* (CRE), 1 on 15 Dec at Sand L *Marshall* (MP), 3 on 16 Dec at North Liberty *Johnson* (JF) and 1 rare blue morph on 20 Dec at Port Neal North *Woodbury* (TJL, \*POR).

**Cackling Goose:** There were 22 reports during the period with the highest of 30 on 19 Dec at Mississippi R *Jackson* (KJM), 218 on 27 Dec *Linn* (KJM) and 24 on 1 Jan at Copper Creek L *Polk* (AB). The last report for the period was 5 on 2-20 Feb again at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO).

**Canada Goose:** Flocks of 1,000 to

8,000 were fairly common throughout the period at various locations around the state. The largest mid-winter concentrations were 5,328 on 27 Dec *Linn* (KJM), 5,875 on 2 Jan at Saylorville Res *Polk* (RLC), 7,000 - 8,300 on 15-16 Jan at Dale Maffitt Res *Dallas* (eBird).

**Trumpeter Swan:** There were 91 Reports from 27 counties this year, probably the highest numbers since the reintroduction of the species. Numbers at Beemer's Pond *Hamilton* through the winter: 217 on 18 Jan (SJD) and 171 on 19 Jan (TMH). Another hot spot for this species was at Maffitt Res *Dallas* with highest counts of 95 on 5 Feb (eBird), 125 on 16 Feb (eBird) and 96 on 22 Feb (AB). High counts at other locations were 186 on 18 Dec *Clinton* and *Scott* (KJM), 80 on 20 Dec *Floyd* at a private pond (CJF), 50 on 31 Dec at Shellberg Quarry at Atlantic *Cass* (RDL) and 63 on 2 Jan at Ada Hayden P *Story* (SJD).

**Tundra Swan:** All: 8 on 16 Dec *Jackson* (KJM), 1 on 2-5 Jan at Ada Hayden P *Story* (SJD), 2 ad 18 Jan at Beemer's Pond *Hamilton* (SJD), 1-2 on 11 Jan-22 Feb at Dale



*Tundra (front) and Trumpeter (rear) Swans, Dale Maffitt Res, Dallas, 13 January 2015. Photograph by Jacob A. Newton, Ottosen, IA.*

Maffitt Res Dallas (AB, JB) and 1 on 18 Jan at Carter L Pottawattamie (eBird).

**Wood Duck:** A late migrant was 1 on 24 Dec Scott (KJM). Jan records were 1 on 18 Jan at Dale Maffitt Res Polk (JB) and 1 on 21 Jan on Mississippi R Lee (JLF).

**Gadwall:** There were only four records of this species this year with 2 on 28 Dec on the Wapsipinicon R Buchanan (KJM), 1 on 1 Jan Allamakee (DK), 19 on 2 Jan at Montrose Lee (eBird) and 1 on 19 Jan at Johnston gravel pits Polk (RLC).

**American Wigeon:** The only record was 1 on 2 Jan at Montrose Lee (eBird).

**American Black Duck:** All but two records were from east and central Iowa this season. High numbers were: 13 on 3 Jan at Saylorville Res Polk (SJD), 3-4 on 17-19 Jan at Saylorville Res, dam pullouts Polk (AB, RLC).

**Mallard:** The highest number reported was 11,400 on 6 Dec at Saylorville Res Polk (AB), 18,900 on 28 Dec at Saylorville Res

Polk (AB) and 6,000 on 17 Jan at Saylorville Res Polk (RLC).

**Northern Shoveler:** Only one report of 1 male on 1 Jan at Pine Lake SP Hardin (MP).

**Northern Pintail:** 2 on 14 Dec at Goose L Johnson (CRE), 2 on 28 Dec at Terry Trueblood RA Johnson (MHB), 2 on 21 Jan at Mississippi R, Keokuk Lee (JLF), 2 on 27 Jan at Ada Hayden P Story (WO), 2 on 28 Jan at Owego Wetland Complex Woodbury (GLV) and 3 on 3 Jan at Saylorville Res Polk (AB).

**Green-winged Teal:** All: 1 on 12 Dec at Ada Hayden P Story (WO), 1 on 14 Dec at Sand L Marshall (MP), 2 on 14 Jan at Cedar River Roller Dam Linn (LGR).

**Canvasback:** 22 reports were submitted with a high of 5,000-50,000 on 15 Dec-2 Jan at Montrose Lee (AB, eBird), 820 on 16 Dec on Mississippi R Clinton (KJM), 125 on 22 Feb at L&D 14 on Mississippi R Scott (eBird).

**Redhead:** High counts reported were 5 males on 9 Dec at Diamond L Poweshiek (MP), 5 on 2 Jan at Montrose Lee (eBird), 10 on 18 Jan at Carter Lake Pottawattamie (eBird), and 50 on 16 Feb at Trumpeter P Lee (eBird).

**Ring-necked Duck:** Highest numbers were 180 on 2 Dec at Montrose Lee (eBird), 28 on 11 Jan at L&D 19 on Mississippi R Lee (DJA), and 100 on 16 Feb at Trumpeter P Lee (eBird).

**Greater Scaup:** All: 2 on 6 Dec at Johnston gravel pits Polk (RLC), 1 on 7 Dec at Urbandale Polk (BE), and 1 female on 18 Jan-28 Feb at Beemer's Pond Hamilton (SJD, TMH).

**Lesser Scaup:** 17 records reported. Highest counts: 82 on 16 Dec on Mississippi R Clinton (KJM) and 75 on 18 Jan at LeClaire Scott (eBird).

**HARLEQUIN DUCK:** 1 on 31 Dec-12

Jan at the Center Street Dam, Des Moines Polk (\*AB, ph, MP, \*SJD, ph, \*JB, ph, \*TMH, ph, HZ, RLC, BVL).

**Surf Scoter:** All: 1 on 22 Jan at LeClaire Scott (eBird).

**White-winged Scoter:** All: 1 on 19 Feb at Credit Island P Scott (eBird).

**Long-tailed Duck:** All: 1 on 4 Dec Mound St, Davenport Scott (eBird), 1 on 10 Dec at Lindsay P at Mississippi R Scott (JF), 1 on 10 Feb on S Concord St. near I-280 bridge, Mississippi R Scott (RS), 1 on 13 Feb at W Canal Shore Dr. at Mississippi R Scott (JF).

**Bufflehead:** All: 1 on 8 Dec at Cherry Glen RA Polk (RLC), 1 on 14 Dec at Davenport Scott (KJM), 11 on 16 Dec at Mississippi R Clinton (KJM) and 1 male Bufflehead x Common Goldeneye hybrid on 15 Dec at Linger Longer Rest Area Lee (AB).

**Common Goldeneye:** High counts were 837 on 14 Dec at Davenport Scott (KJM), 625 on 15 Dec at River Road, Mississippi R Lee (AB) and 753 on 22 Feb at L&D 14, Mississippi R Scott (eBird).

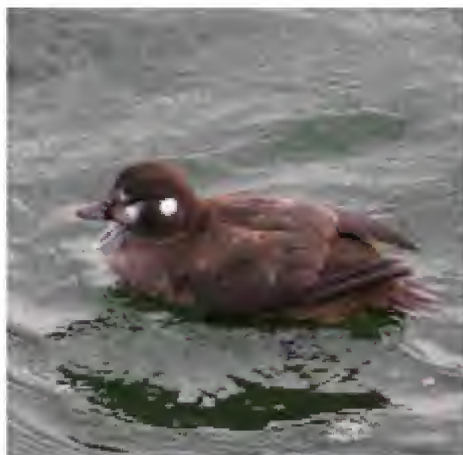
**Hooded Merganser:** High: 5 on 6 Dec at Saylorville Res Polk (RLC), 7 on 14 Dec at Davenport Scott (KJM) and 4 on 16 Dec at Mississippi R Clinton (KJM).

**Common Merganser:** High counts: 2,400 on 6 Dec at Saylorville Res Polk (AB), 1,476 on 14 Dec at Davenport Polk (KJM) and 7,600 on 1 Jan at Red Rock Res Marion (AB). There were a total of 60 reports with many having over 500 individuals counted.

**Red-breasted Merganser:** There were 11 reports of single individuals in Dec, Jan and Feb, the latest on 2 Feb at Riverview P, Ft. Madison Lee (eBird).

**Ruddy Duck:** High: 10 reports with a high of 5 on 14 Dec at Davenport Scott (KJM) and 4 on 13 Dec at Terry Trueblood RA Johnson (MHB).

**Northern Bobwhite:** One report of



*Harlequin Duck, Des Moines, Polk, 3 January 2015. Photograph by John Bissell, Grimes, IA.*

2 on 20 January at Eugene & Eloise Armstrong farm Madison (DTh).

**Gray Partridge:** This year there were 11 reports, mostly from the northeast with highest numbers of 8 on 10 Jan Howard (LR), 4 on 3 Feb northeast of Polk City Polk (AB) 20-27 21 Feb Howard (LR, SJD), 5 on 28 Feb Benton (JF).

**Ring-necked Pheasant:** 20 Reports from 13 counties with the following high counts: 10 on 14 Dec at Davenport Scott (KJM), 7 on 3 Jan Clayton (KJM), 15-75 on 10 Jan-27 Feb at Lime Springs Howard (LR), 71 on 7 Feb Boone (RIA).

**Ruffed Grouse:** None reported.

**Wild Turkey:** High: 200 on 20 Dec in Logan Cemetery, Sioux City Woodbury (GLV), 110 on 3 Jan Clayton (KJM), 19 on 17 Jan west of Geneva Franklin (MP), 106 on 16 Feb on North River Road Clay (LAS) and 80 on 27 Feb at Lime Springs Howard (LR).

**Pied-billed Grebe:** All: 2 on 1-3 Dec at Ada Hayden P Story (WO), 1 on 6 Dec at Saylorville Res Polk (RLC), 1 on 14 Dec at Davenport Scott (KJM), and 1 on 17 Dec Clinton (KJM).



*Bald Eagle, Iowa City, Johnson, 7 February 2015. Photograph by Mark Brown, Iowa City, IA.*



*Red-tailed Hawk, Iowa Arboretum, Boone, 11 January 2015. Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA.*

**Horned Grebe:** All: 1 on 2 Dec at Ada Hayden P Story (WO), 1 on 3 Dec at Terry Trueblood RA Johnson (MHB) and 2 on 5 Dec at Red Rock Res Marion (JF).

**Double-crested Cormorant:** All: 1 on 3 Dec at Red Rock Res dam Marion (MP) and 1 on 14 Dec at Davenport Scott (KJM).

**American White Pelican:** High: 16 on 3 Dec at Red Rock Res dam Marion (MP) 52 on 6 Dec at overflow spillway, Saylorville Res Polk (AB), 30 on 16 Dec at Mississippi R Clinton (KJM) and 52 on 23 Feb at Red Rock Res Marion (AB).

**Great Blue Heron:** 19 reports submitted with highest numbers of 20 on 18 Dec at Mississippi R Clinton and Scott (KJM), 11 on 11 Jan at Burlington Water Treatment Plant Des Moines (DJA), 3 on 25 Jan Polk (AB) and 5 on 21 Jan at Mississippi R, Burlington Des Moines (JLF).

**Turkey Vulture:** All: 1 on 23-26 Dec at Iowa Burlington Bridge Des Moines (eBird).

**Bald Eagle:** High counts on the Mississippi River: 593 on 9 Jan on the Mississippi R Clinton and Scott (KJM), 185 on 11 Jan at Mississippi R Louisa (KJM). High counts

away from the Mississippi R were: 414 on 1 Jan at Red Rock Res Marion (AB) and 86 on 15 Feb at Coralville Res dam Johnson (MHB).

**Northern Harrier:** 16 reports were received with highs of 3 on 2-28 Jan at Neal Smith NWR Jasper (KVS) and 4 on 24 Jan Woodbury (GLV).

**Sharp-shinned Hawk:** A total of 18 were reported, 12 from the middle part of the state and 6 from Clayton, Clinton, Muscatine and Scott.

**Cooper's Hawk:** 22 were reported for the period mostly from the eastern and central part of the state with one report of 1 on 14 Feb at Sioux City Woodbury (GLV). Most reports were of single individuals with several records of 2 or 3 along the Mississippi R.

**Northern Goshawk:** All: 1 on 14 Dec at Goose Lake Johnson (\*RJH, ph), 1 on 3 Jan at April Ave Clayton (DJA) and 1 on 10 Jan at Clear L Cerro Gordo (RGo).

**Red-shouldered Hawk:** All: 1 on 14 Dec at Davenport Scott (KJM), 2 on 17 Dec Clinton (KJM), 1 on 20 Dec Linn (KJM), 1



ad on 12 Jan at Newport Road, Newport Township *Johnson* (CRE), 1 on 6 Feb at Montezuma *Poweshiek* (DK) and 1 on 7 Feb at Mississippi R, L&D 14 *Scott* (JF).

**Red-tailed Hawk:** There was only 1 dark morph and 1 Krider's individual reported during the period. Highest reports were 25 on 18 Dec *Clinton* and *Scott* (KJM), 34 on 23 Dec *Muscatine* (KJM) and 14 on 27 Feb at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose* (RLC).

**Rough-legged Hawk:** This was a good year to find this species with 61 reports totaling 131 individuals during the season. High counts: 11-12 on 8-21 Feb at Lime Springs *Howard* (LR) and 10 on 27 Feb at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose* (RLC). Only 3 dark morphs were indicated in all three months.

**Golden Eagle:** All: 1 imm on 2 Dec at east end of State Highway A26 *Allamakee* (JF), 1 ad on 19 Dec *Jackson* (KJM), 1 on 21 Dec Saylorville Res *Polk* (AB), 1 imm second year on 18 Jan Waterman Township *O'Brien* (LAS), 1 on 20 Jan Silver Sioux RA *Cherokee* (TMH), 1 imm first year on 16 Feb at Waterman Township *O'Brien* (LAS) and 1 on 24 Feb *Howard* (RGo).

**American Coot:** There were 42 reports, mostly from Dale Moffitt Res *Dallas* with up to 37 birds found there this season. 5-6 on 3-11 Dec at Terry Trueblood RA *Johnson* (MHB), 1 on 16 Dec at Grinnell City P *Poweshiek* (MP), 1 on 3 Jan at Saylorville Res dam pullouts *Polk* (AB), 100 on 1-18 Jan at Carter Lake *Pottawattamie* (eBird), 1 on 28 Jan at Bays Branch WMA *Guthrie* (DTh, RLC), and 1 on 17 Feb at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO).

**Sandhill Crane:** A single report of 1 on 20 Dec near Sergeant Bluff along the Missouri R *Woodbury* (TJL).

**Killdeer:** All: 1 on 5 Dec at Red Rock Res *Marion* (JF) and 2 on 14 Dec at Davenport *Scott* (KJM).

**Wilson's Snipe:** Only one report: 1 on 2 Dec *Ringgold* (JRL).

**Ring-billed Gull:** 17 reports with high counts of 4,380 on 21 Dec at Saylorville Res *Polk* (AB), 942 on 24 Dec at Mississippi R *Scott* and *Muscatine* (KJM), 820 on 1 Jan at Marina Cove RA, Red Rock Res *Marion* (AB), and 720 on 1 Jan at Whitebreast RA, Red Rock Res *Marion* (AB).

**CALIFORNIA GULL:** 1 ad on 6 Dec at Saylorville Res *Polk* (\*AB, ph).

**Herring Gull:** High counts: 620 on 6 Dec at Saylorville Res dam pullouts *Polk* (AB), 840 on 13 Dec at Saylorville Res *Polk* (AB), and 760 on 1 Jan at Cherry Glen RA, Saylorville Res *Polk* (DJA).

**Thayer's Gull:** All: 2-6 on 6-28 Dec at Saylorville Res *Polk* (AB, RLC), 1 ad and 3 juv on 20 Dec-1 Jan Red Rock Res *Marion* (AB), 2-7 on 3 Dec-3 Jan at Center St dam, Des Moines *Polk* (DJA, AB, JB, RLC, TMH), 1 on 14 Dec at Davenport *Scott* (KJM), 6 on 4 Dec at Ottumwa *Wapello* (JF), 1-2 on 11 Dec-17 Jan at L&D 15 Mississippi R *Scott* (JF, WWH), 1 on 21 Jan at Mississippi R, Burlington Des Moines (JLF), 1 on 23 Jan-12 Feb at Cedar Lake *Linn* (JF), and 1 on 13 Jan at Mississippi R, L&D 14 *Scott* (JF).

**Iceland Gull:** All: 1 on 4 Dec at Ottumwa *Wapello* (\*JF, ph), up to 5 on 6 Dec-3 Jan at Center St dam, Des Moines *Polk* (AB, \*JB, ph, \*TMH, ph), 1 on 11 Dec at Bettendorf *Scott* (\*JF, ph), 1 ad and 1 2nd cycle on 20 Dec at Mississippi R, L&D 15 *Scott* (\*JF, ph), 1 juv on 1 Jan at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD), 1 2nd cycle on 11 Jan at Mississippi R, L&D 14 *Scott* (\*TGS, ph), and 1 ad on 28 Jan at Mississippi R, L&D 14 *Scott* (\*JF, ph).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull:** All: 1-2 on 3 Dec-21 Jan at Center St dam, Des Moines *Polk* (DJA, JB, AB, BC, RLC, SJD), 1 on 4 Dec at Ottumwa *Wapello* (JF), 1-2 on 6 Dec-19 Jan at Saylorville Res *Polk* (DJA, AB, BC, RLC, SJD, POR, JG) included at least 4





*Iceland Gull, Des Moines, Polk, 2 January 2015. Photograph by Linda Rudolph, Coralville, IA.*

different birds by age, 1 on 11 Dec at Bettendorf *Scott* (JF), 1 on 14 Dec at Davenport *Scott* (KJM), 1 on 20 Dec at Cordova County P, Red Rock Res *Marion* (DJA), 1 2nd cycle on 1 Jan Red Rock Res *Marion* (AB), 1 ad and 1 juv on 3 Jan at Red Rock Res *Marion* (SJD), 1 ad on 25 Jan at Cedar L *Linn* (JF), and 1 2nd cycle on 9 Feb at Carter L *Linn* (JF).

**Glaucous Gull:** All: 1 on 3 Dec on Roberts Creek County P, Red Rock Res *Marion* (MP), 1 juv on 3 Dec- 9 Jan at Center St dam, Des Moines *Polk* (AB, JB, BC, RLC, SJD), 1 1st cycle on 10 Dec at Saylorville Res *Polk* (DTh), 1 2nd cycle on 10-20 Dec at Mississippi R, L&D 15 *Scott* (JF), 1 ad and 1 3rd cycle on 21 Dec-3 Jan at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD), 1 on 27 Dec-1 Jan at Red Rock Res *Marion* (AB), 1 juv on 27 Dec-1 Jan at Johnston gravel pits *Polk* (AB), 3 on 11 Jan at Johnston gravel pits *Polk* (AB), 1 juv on 6-12 Feb at Cedar Lake *Linn* (JF, WWH), and 1 3rd cycle on 13 Feb at Coralville L *Johnson* (MHB).

#### **GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL:**

All: 1 3rd cycle 11 Jan at Iowa River Power Dam, Iowa River, Coralville at Mississippi R, L&D 14 *Scott* (\*TGS, ph) and 1 1st cycle on 8-12 Feb at Cedar L *Linn* (\*JF, ph, WWH).

**Eurasian Collared-Dove:** Highest numbers were 15 on 27 Jan at Malcomb *Poweshiek* (MP) and 72 on 22 Feb in Bondurant *Polk* (AB).

**Mourning Dove:** There were 22 reports. High counts: 112 on 14 Dec Davenport *Scott* (KJM) and 398 on 24 Dec *Scott* and *Muscatine* (KJM).

**Eastern Screech-Owl:** There were 13 reports for this common nocturnal species. High count was 12 on 17 Dec *Clinton* (KJM).

**Great Horned Owl:** There were 22 reports of this species with a total of 87 individuals. High count was 17 on 28 Dec *Buchanan* (KJM). A *subarcticus* subspecies was found on 2 Jan at Union Slough NWR *Kossuth* (\*JN, ph).

**Snowy Owl:** There were 28 reports that included 13 or 14 most likely distinct individuals. By month the reports were from December (3), January (9), and February (1 or 2). Most reports were clustered in central and north-central Iowa this winter. At least 3 individuals (ad male, juv male, and juv female) were seen 9-31 Dec near Woden *Hancock* (Paul Huling ph, Kevin T. Murphy, PH). A juv male was photographed 1-8 Jan s of Ventura *Cerro Gordo* (Paul Huling ph, mob.). At least 4 individuals (ad male, juv male, juv female, and an unknown) were enjoyed by many from 11 Jan through the end of the period near Hayden Prairie *Howard* (Larry Reis ph, m.ob.). Another cluster of sightings of at least 3 individuals occurred in *Wright* with 1 on 11 Jan near Eagle Grove (Tim Smith fide SJD), an ad male on 25 Jan w of Big Wall L (Dave Hansen), and an ad male on 21 Feb n of Big Wall L (SJD, ph). The only other reports were single adults on

23 Jan near Brooklyn *Poweshiek* (Laura Decoster fide SJD) and in late Jan near Grafton *Worth* (David Vote, ph).

**Barred Owl:** There were 16 reports of this common species.

**Long-eared Owl:** All: 1 on 7 Dec *Cerro Gordo* (RGo, CJF), 1 on 26 Dec at Wolf Creek County P *Grundy* (MP), 1 on 26 Dec at Big Creek SP *Polk* (MHB), 2 on 28 Dec *Buchanan* (DJA, KJM), 1 on 1 Jan at Elk Creek WMA *Worth* (PH), 1 on 19 Jan at River Valley Wetland *Cedar* (CRE), 1 on 24 Jan at Hendrickson Marsh WMA *Story* (MP), 3 on 31 Jan-15 Feb at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD), and 1 on 20 Feb *Worth* (RGo).

**Short-eared Owl:** All: 1 on 1 Dec-10 Jan at Neal Smith NWR *Jasper* (KVS) and 3 on 17 Dec *Clinton* (KJM).

**Northern Saw-whet Owl:** All: 1 on 6 Dec-19 Jan at Johnston gravel pits *Polk* (AB, JB, RLC), 2 on 14 Dec at Ankeny *Polk* (DJA), 1-4 on 11 Dec-16 Feb at Moorhead Pioneer P *Ida* (DoP), 1 on 20 Dec-25 Jan at Lime Creek Nature Center *Cerro Gordo* (CJF, RGo, PH, BVL), 3 on 28 Dec *Buchanan* (KJM), 1 on 4 Jan *Clayton* (KJM), 1 on 17 Jan at Maynes Grove *Franklin* (MP), 1 on 23 Jan-21 Feb at Grammer Grove WA *Marshall* (MP), 1 on 28 Jan at Bays Branch WMA *Guthrie* (DTh), 1 on 31 Jan at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD), 2 on 8-18 Feb *Dallas* (SJD), 1 on 15 Feb *Boone* (SJD), 1 on 20 Feb *Worth* (RGo), and 2 on 21 Feb at George Wyth SP *Black Hawk* (TMH, WWH, CL, HR).

**Belted Kingfisher:** A total of 18 reports was submitted of 28 individuals with the highest being 4 on 14 Dec Davenport *Scott* (KJM).

**Red-headed Woodpecker:** There were 29 reports this winter. High: 29 on 17 Dec Syracuse WMA *Clinton* (KJM).

**Red-bellied Woodpecker:** There were 21 reports with a high of 67 on 24 Dec *Scott* and *Muscatine* (KJM).



*Merlin*, Hamilton, 18 January 2015. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** All: 1 on 1 Dec north of Iowa City *Johnson* (JLF), 1 on 17 Dec *Clinton* (KJM), 2 on 19 Dec *Jackson* (KJM), 3 on 19 Dec *Scott* and *Muscatine* (KJM), 1 on 27 Dec *Linn* (KJM), 2 on 3 Jan *Clayton* (KJM), and 2 on 4 Jan *Clayton* (KJM).

**Northern Flicker:** There were 18 reports submitted with a high of 15 on 19 Dec *Jackson* (KJM) and 12 on 20 Dec at Logan Cemetery *Woodbury* (GLV).

**Pileated Woodpecker:** A total of 29 reports of 56 individuals, all from the eastern half of the state with a high of 7 on 26 Dec *Louisa* (KJM).

**American Kestrel:** There were 20 reports totaling 79 individuals with 8 on 18 Dec *Scott* and *Clinton* (KJM) and 19 on 23 Dec *Muscatine* (KJM).

**Merlin:** There were 20 reported from 14 counties with a high of 2 on 24 Jan *Woodbury* (GLV). Of those reporting subspecies 5 were *columbarius* and 2 were *richardsonii*.

**Peregrine Falcon:** All: 1 on 14 Dec Davenport *Scott* (KJM), 1 on 21 Jan at Burlington *Des Moines* (JLF), 2 on 23 Jan *Linn*



*Black-capped Chickadee, Kent P, Johnson, 28 December 2014. Photograph by Mark Brown, Iowa City, IA.*



*Tufted Titmouse, Polk, 31 January 2015. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.*

(eBird), and 2 (probably the same individuals) on 25 Feb at Cedar Rapids *Linn* (BC).

**Eastern Phoebe:** All: 1 on 20 Dec *Marion* (DJA).

**SAY'S PHOEBE:** A rare winter find was 1 on 12 Dec at Stony Hollow Rd and 105th Ave, Burlington *Des Moines* (\*CRF).

**Loggerhead Shrike:** All: 1 on 2 Dec *Ringgold* (JRL) and 1 on 23 Dec *Union* (SJD).

**Northern Shrike:** There were 25 reports of 26 individuals this winter scattered over most of the state. All were from the northern two thirds of the state.

**Black-billed Magpie:** None reported.

**Horned Lark:** High: 300 on 15-27 Feb at Lime Springs *Howard* (LR).

**Tufted Titmouse:** There were 19 reports with a high of 34 on 23 Dec *Muscatine* (KJM).

**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** Only 10 reports of this species from all areas of the state. High: 6 on 28 Dec *Buchanan* (KJM).

**Brown Creeper:** There were 24 reports with 93 total individuals. The highest numbers were 11 on 14 Dec *Davenport Scott* (KJM) and 11 on 17 Dec *Muscatine* (KJM). The north and west most records

were 1 on 20 Jan at Silver Sioux RA *Cherokee* (TMH) and 1 on 21 Feb in Sioux City *Woodbury* (GLV).

**Winter Wren:** All: 1 on 14 Dec at *Davenport Scott* (KJM), 5 on 19 Dec *Jackson* (KJM), 1 on 24 Dec *Scott* (KJM), 2 on 20 Dec-21 Jan at Cascade Ravine *Des Moines* (JLF), 3 on 3 Jan *Clayton* (KJM), 1 on 23 Jan at Springbrook SP *Guthrie* (RIA), and 1 on 4 Jan *Clayton* (KJM).

**Carolina Wren:** There were 14 reports this season with a total of 29 individuals. Most reports were of 1 or 2 individuals, most from the southern and eastern part of the state, with a high of 7 on 24 Dec *Scott* and *Muscatine* (KJM).

**Golden-crowned Kinglet:** All: 3 on 17 Dec *Clinton* (KJM), 1 on 20 Dec *Linn* (KJM), 2 on 20 Dec-21 Jan at Crapo P, Burlington *Des Moines* (JLF), 2 on 27 Dec *Linn* (KJM), 1 on 28 Dec *Buchanan* (KJM), and 1 on 3 Jan *Clayton* (KJM).

**Eastern Bluebird:** Higher numbers were reported this year with 21 reports and a high of 59 on 19 Dec *Jackson* (KJM) and 40 on 24 Jan at Iowa City *Johnson* (eBird).



*White-breasted Nuthatch, Kent P, Johnson, 28 December 2014. Photograph by Mark Brown, Iowa City, IA.*



*American Tree Sparrow, Harrier M, Boone, 11 January 2015. Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA.*

**Townsend's Solitaire:** All: 1 on 19-24 Jan at Mines of Spain *Dubuque* (MHB, CRE, DAS) and 1 on 20 Jan *O'Brien* (TMH).

**Hermit Thrush:** All: 1 on 19 Dec *Jackson* (KJM), 2 on 19 Dec at Green Is WMA *Jackson* (KJM), 3 on 20 Dec *Linn* (KJM), 1 on 30 Dec at Little Sioux R, *Spencer Clay* (LAS), 1 on 3 Jan *Clayton* (KJM), 1 on 15 Jan *Winneshieck* (DK), 1 on 20 Jan *O'Brien* (TMH), and 1 on 25 Jan at Lime Creek Nature Center *Cerro Gordo* (CJF, BVL).

**American Robin:** Numbers were good this winter with a high of 135 on 27 Dec *Linn* (KJM).

**Varied Thrush:** All: 1 on 13 Dec at Jordan Creek Trail *Polk* (eBird) and 1 female on 23-28 Feb near Lime Springs *Howard* (RIA, MHB, CJF, \*JJU, ph, RGo, DP, LR).

**Brown Thrasher:** All: 1 on 14 Jan at Thorpe P *Winnebago* (CJF).

**Northern Mockingbird:** All: 1 on 7 Feb at Walton Farm *Dubuque* (eBird).

**Bohemian Waxwing:** All: 1 on 31 Jan at Big Creek SP *Polk* (\*SJD, ph).

**Cedar Waxwing:** Highest numbers were: 190 on 26 Dec at Big Creek SP *Polk* (MHB) and 630 on 31 Jan at Big Creek SP *Polk* (SJD).

**Lapland Longspur:** Highest numbers were 1,600 on 4 Jan *Clayton* (DJA, KJM), 400 on 8 Jan *Boone* (DCH), and 300 on 15 Feb near Lime Springs *Howard* (LR).

**Snow Bunting:** Largest flocks for the period were 220 on 1 Jan near Lime Springs *Howard* (LR) and 800-850 on 21-28 Feb near Lime Springs *Howard* (CJF, LR).

**Orange-crowned Warbler:** A rare winter find was 1 on 17 Dec-4 Jan at Iowa City *Johnson* (JLF fide Rosemary Plapp).

**Pine Warbler:** 1 on 4 Dec-21 Jan north of Burlington *Des Moines* (JLF).

**Yellow-rumped Warbler:** Only six reports this season with peaks of 6 on 19 Dec *Jackson* (KJM) and 4 on 24 Dec *Muscatine* (KJM).

**American Tree Sparrow:** High: 262





*Song Sparrow*, Harrier M, Boone, 4 February 2015. Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA.



*Swamp Sparrow*, Harrier M, Boone, 6 February 2015. Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA.

on 17 Dec Clinton (KJM) and 246 on 18 Dec Clinton and Scott (KJM).

**Chipping Sparrow:** All: 1 on 15 Dec at Keokuk Lee (\*FLM, ph) and 1 on 3 Jan at a Greene feeder Butler (BDB, ph).

**Field Sparrow:** All: 1 on 9 Dec at Black Hawk P Black Hawk (DE).

**Fox Sparrow:** There were 5 reports with a high of 4 on 24 Dec Muscatine (KJM).

**Song Sparrow:** There were 27 reports, mostly from the central part of the state. Highest numbers this year were 19 on 14 Dec Davenport Scott (KJM), 20 on 20 Dec at Tannery Ponds Woodbury (TJL), and 22 on 24 Dec Scott and Muscatine (KJM).

**Swamp Sparrow:** High counts: 15 on 14 Dec Davenport Scott (KJM) and 7 on 24 Dec Scott and Muscatine (KJM).

**White-throated Sparrow:** High count: 69 on 14 Dec at Davenport Scott (KJM). A total of 55 reports were entered.

**Harris's Sparrow:** Only 4 reports. Highest count: 40 on 20 Dec at Tannery Ponds Woodbury (TJL).

**White-crowned Sparrow:** Only 7 reports. Highest counts: 5 on 23 Dec Muscatine (KJM) and 8 on 4 Jan Clayton (KJM).

**Dark-eyed Junco:** Oregon race records this period included 1 on 21 Dec at L McBride SP Johnson (MHB), 1 on 31 Jan at F W Kent P Johnson (MHB), 1 on 11 Jan at Benton County Conservation Center Benton (MHB), and 1 "real colorful pink-sided race" on 10 Jan at Grammer Grove Marshall (MP).

**Red-winged Blackbird:** Highest counts were 325 on 26 Dec Louisa (KJM), 250 on 19 Dec Jackson (KJM), and 250 on 25 Jan at Neal Smith NWR Jasper (AB).

**Eastern Meadowlark:** None reported with vocalizations or details.

**Western Meadowlark:** None reported with vocalizations or details.

**Yellow-headed Blackbird:** All: 1 on 20 Dec at Sergeant Bluff Woodbury (TJL) and 1 on 3 Jan near Hitchcock Nature Center Pottawattamie (\*EB).

**Rusty Blackbird:** High counts: 10 on

27 Dec *Woodbury* (eBird) and 12 on 1 Jan at Des Moines R *Van Buren* (eBird). There were a total of 8 reports of 32 individuals from five counties.

**Brewer's Blackbird:** All: 1 on 19 Dec *Jackson* (KJM) and 1 on 3 Jan near Hitchcock Nature Center *Pottawattamie* (\*EB).

**Common Grackle:** Only 12 reports with a high of 10 on 23 Dec *Muscatine* (KJM) and 56 on 13 Jan at a farm east of Kelley *Story* (AB).

**Brown-headed Cowbird:** High count: 403 on 27 Dec *Linn* (KJM).

**Baltimore Oriole:** 1 on 3 Dec-21 Jan n of Burlington *Des Moines* (JLF).

**PINE GROSBEEK:** One of the winter highlights was a russet variant possibly ad female or imm male on 20-22 Dec at Iowa State University Horticulture Farm *Story* (\*DCH ph, \*SJD ph, \*JG, ph, \*TMH, ph).

**House Finch:** Only 13 reports. High counts: 73 on 20 Dec *Linn* (KJM) and 73 on 24 Dec *Scott* and *Muscatine* (KJM).

**Purple Finch:** There were 28 reports. High counts: 19 on 19 Dec *Clayton* (KJM) and 43 on 3 Jan *Jackson* (KJM).

**Red Crossbill:** Only one report: 7 (3 males, 4 females) on 17 Jan at Hardin County Conservation Board Headquarters Segment *Hardin* (MP).

**White-winged Crossbill:** Only one report: 3-8 on 27-31 Jan at Hartley Cemetery *O'Brien* (LAS).

**Common Redpoll:** There were 33 reports this season with a high of 120-250 on 21-27 Dec near Lime Springs *Howard* (LR).

**Pine Siskin:** There were 41 reports this season with a high of 62 on 1-24 Dec north of Iowa City *Johnson* (JLF) and 75 on 29 Dec at Yellow River SF *Allamakee* (LR).

**American Goldfinch:** High counts: 127 on 18 Dec *Clinton* and *Scott* (KJM) and 101 on 19 Dec *Jackson* (KJM).

**Eurasian Tree Sparrow:** There were 32 reports with high counts of 53 on 14 Dec Davenport *Scott* (KJM), 110 on 23 Dec *Muscatine* (KJM), 77 on 26 Dec *Louisa* (KJM), 60 on 18 Jan behind Costco *Johnson* (LGR), and 31 on 1 Jan at Cedar R roller dam *Linn* (BT). One on 14 Feb *Marion* (EBird) was out of range.

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# Iowa Christmas Bird Count, 2014–2015

*Chris Caster*

Data were submitted for forty-eight Iowa Christmas Bird Counts this season (Table 1, Figure 1). The Dallas County count was restarted and the Marshalltown count was discontinued. Reports were not received from Amana, Buchanan County, Carroll County, and NW and SE Clayton counties.

Every count season is different and this one drove home the point. In advance of the count season we had one of the coldest and snowiest Novembers on record. According to the state climatologist, temperatures fell nearly 50 degrees on the 10th and failed to climb above freezing anywhere in the state between the 11th and the 19th. But a warm spell on the 29th with temperatures near 60 degrees melted off most of the state's snow cover. December was quite the opposite as above normal temperatures occurred from the 4th through the 28th. Precipitation came as rain on 14 and 22 December. The statewide average snowfall for the month was only 1.5 inches. Only the Westfield and Canton counts, both held 3 January, reported more than an inch of snow; nearly three-fourths of the counts reported none. Open water predominated and snow was only a factor by its absence.

The species count this season was 131, which is well below average. The last time we had a lower species count was 2000–2001. The total number of birds (598,287) was well above average. Davenport had the high count with 93 species; Saylorville (89), Keokuk (85), and Burlington (84) were the others to reach the 80s. Spirit Lake (53) led the northern counts, DeSoto NWR (70) led the Missouri counts, and Shenandoah (65) and Red Rock (64) led the southern counts. The average count this year had 14 field observers, 6 field parties, and 56 species.

## REGULAR SPECIES

Only seven species were found in record numbers this season. It was a good year for gulls and icterids; most other groups were found in typical numbers. Count totals are listed for the most frequently reported species (Table 2) and for species found on three or fewer counts (Table 3).

Canada Goose (169,956) numbers have been unusually high for the past five seasons regardless of the weather. Cackling Geese (1,686) remained in good numbers. Greater White-fronted Geese (1,979) were found on fourteen counts in an eastern distribution, and in record numbers thanks to more than 1600 birds at Western Mercer County. Snow Geese (1,003) were predominantly in the south and west. Ross's Geese (3) were reported from Iowa City and Sioux City. The conditions proved right for Trumpeter Swans (736) which were again in record numbers. Large numbers were at Clinton, Princeton, and Des Moines. Tundra Swans (1,148) were nearly all at Clinton, but for the second year two were far from the Mississippi at SE Webster County. Mallards (73,655) were plentiful. American Black Ducks (41) were scattered across sixteen counts. Seventeen Wood Ducks was average. All the other dabblers were well below average. Canvasback (11,769) were predominantly at

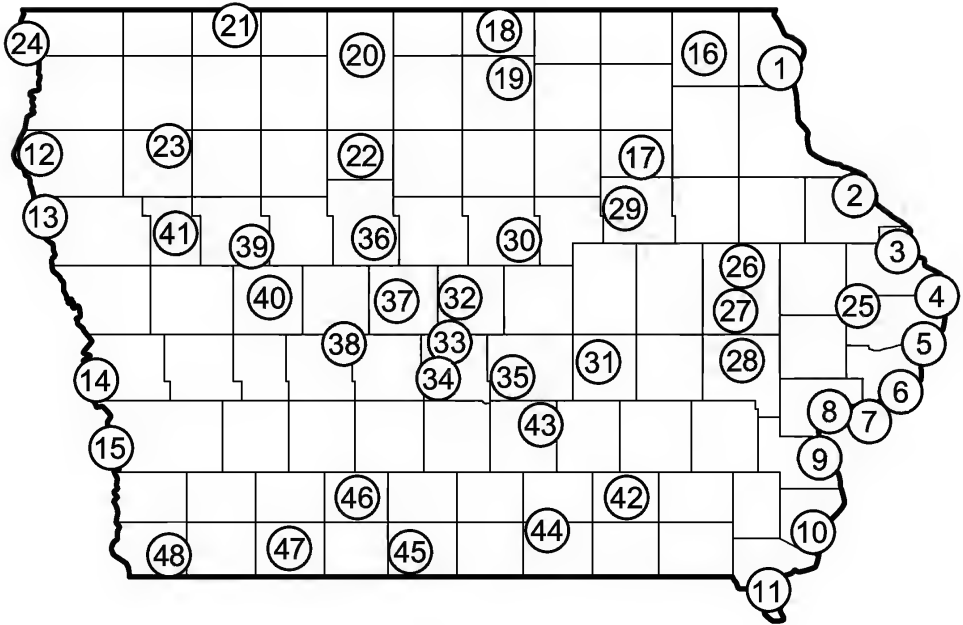


Figure 1. Christmas bird counts in Iowa, 2014–2015 (see Tables 2 and 3).

Keokuk and Clinton. Greater Scaup (46) were scattered across seven counts. Common Goldeneye (5,262) had their lowest year in seven. Among the divers, only Redheads (82) bested their average. Common Mergansers (20,515) were therefore notable, appearing in near record numbers.

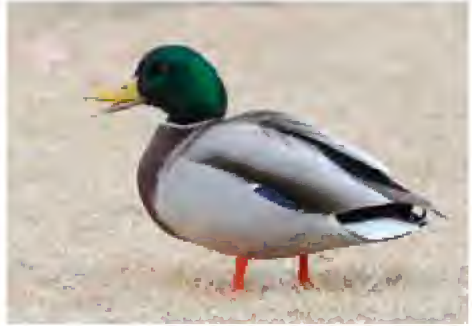
Northern Bobwhite (33) were on eight counts. Ten at Red Rock and nine at DeSoto NWR were highs. Gray Partridge (5) were only found at Ames. Undoubtedly the lack of snow cover hindered that effort. Ring-necked Pheasant (670) numbers remained nearly half their average. Wild Turkeys (2,265) were found in average numbers and from all but five counts. Pied-billed Grebes (5) were all singles. Double-crested Cormorants (6) were all at Davenport. American White Pelicans (262) were reported from nine counts. Great Blue Herons (106) were below average.

Bald Eagles (3,279) were somewhat below their average, but were found throughout Iowa. Northern Harriers (105) and Cooper's Hawks (103) were in good numbers. Northern Goshawks were at Canton, Iowa City, and Ida County. Red-shouldered Hawks (11) were in typical numbers from seven counts. Red-tailed Hawks (1,911) were average, but Rough-legged Hawks (199) hovered above their average. Golden Eagles (3) fell from the clouds after three straight double-digit years. American Coots (216) were scarce this year and Killdeer (13) and Wilson's Snipe (7) were half their normal totals. Ring-billed Gulls (18,400) were in average numbers from Clinton on south. Herring Gulls (5,918) were abundant in a similar distribution. Thayer's Gulls (16) were in record numbers as were Lesser Black-backed Gulls (6). Two Glaucous Gulls were at both Davenport and Saylorville.

Rock Pigeons (12,900) and Eurasian Collared-Doves (914) were above their averages.



*Tundra Swan, Beemer's Pond, Hamilton,  
18 January 2015. Photograph by Stephen J.  
Dinsmore, Ames, IA.*



*Mallard, Polk, 10 December 2014. Photo-  
graph by Richard S. Wacha, Des Moines, IA.*



*Bald Eagle, Iowa  
Arboretum, Boone,  
11 February 2015.  
Photograph by Larry  
Dau, Boone, IA.*

*Great Horned Owl  
of the subarcticus  
subspecies, Titonka,  
Kossuth, 3 January  
2015. Photograph by  
Jacob A. Newton, Ot-  
tosen, IA.*

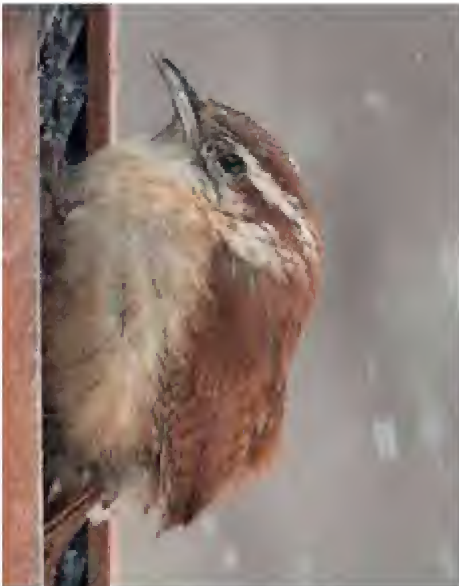




*Pileated Woodpecker, Hartman Reserve, Cedar Falls, Black Hawk, 30 November 2014. Photograph by Tom Schilke, Waterloo, IA.*



*Tufted Titmouse, Kent P, Johnson, 28 December 2014. Photograph by Mark Brown, Iowa City, IA.*



*Carolina Wren, Polk, 25 February 2015. Photograph by Richard S. Wacha, Des Moines, IA.*



*Meadowlark species, Harrier M, Boone, 6 February 2015. Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA.*

On the other hand, Mourning Doves (3,079) counts have declined somewhat the last two years. Eastern Screech-Owls (135) were found in very good numbers. Seventeen were at Jamaica and a dozen were at Lost Nation. Great Horned Owls (315) had their best count in over two decades. Barred Owls (243) were in record numbers. Long-eared Owls (30) were down. Ten were at Lamoni and seven were at Des Moines. Short-eared Owls (4) were at Lost Nation and Burlington. Northern Saw-whet Owls (11) were on seven counts. Ida County had three and Canton had two. Belted Kingfishers (99) were below average.

Red-headed (302), Red-bellied (2,409), Downy (2,958), and Hairy Woodpeckers (886), and Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers (43) all posted typical numbers. Pileated Woodpeckers (169) were found in record numbers. Western Mercer County had nineteen and Green Island had seventeen. American Kestrels (560) were plentiful. Merlins (21) though still in great numbers, returned to earth after consecutive thirty-plus counts. Peregrine Falcons (8) were in record numbers.

Northern Shrikes (41) were in below average numbers. Mason City had four and Bremer County had three. Loggerhead Shrikes (2) were only reported from Union County and Taylor County. Taylor County achieved the shrike trifecta by relegating a third bird to shrike sp. Blue Jays (5,106) and American Crows (62,733) were abundant. Horned Larks (1,574) were about a third of their usual statewide total.

Black-capped Chickadees (6,770), Tufted Titmice (807) and White-breasted Nuthatches (3,034) were at their average. Red-breasted Nuthatches (38) had their lowest count in over a decade. Brown Creepers (368) were in good numbers. Carolina Wrens (118) decreased quite a lot over the previous two seasons. Winter Wrens (37) and Golden-crowned Kinglets (91) were at their averages. Single Ruby-crowned Kinglets were at Davenport and Western Mercer County.

Eastern Bluebirds (1,121) and Hermit Thrushes (28) were both found in average numbers. Inexplicably, American Robins (3,004) were less than half their normal total. Brown Thrashers were at Mason City and Jamaica. Jamaica has now had multiple thrashers on each of the last three counts. Cedar Waxwings (2,903) and Yellow-rumped Warblers (56) were relatively scarce. European Starlings (49,885) were also somewhat scarce; Keokuk suffered the high count this season. Lapland Longspurs (2,423) were scarce and Snow Buntings (112) had their second lowest count in a decade.

This count had the fewest towhees in a decade. Only three were found, all Spotted: two at DeSoto NWR and one at Omaha. American Tree (12,747) and Song (633) sparrows were average. Swamp (180) and White-throated (575) sparrow numbers were up. Fox (19), Lincoln's (4), Harris's (158), and White-crowned (85) sparrow numbers were down. Single Field Sparrows were at Green Island and Burlington. Dark-eyed Juncos (17,262) had their worst count in ten.

This was a really good year for icterids! Red-winged Blackbirds (26,800) were nearly double their average. Meadowlarks (570) were plentiful although no Eastern's were reported. Rusty (195) and Brewer's (40) blackbirds were above average; the latter were reported from six counts with thirty at Burlington. Common Grackles (7,191) posted a count second only to last season's record total. Brown-headed Cowbirds (941) fell slightly below their average this season.

Northern Cardinals (5,598), Purple Finches (508), and House Finches (2,626) all



fell below their averages this year. Common Redpolls (35) were on five counts; 25 were at Union Slough and 7 were at Red Rock. Pine Siskins (563), American Goldfinches (4,516), and House Sparrows (26,347) were found in average numbers this year. Eurasian Tree Sparrows (1,256) had their lowest count in the last five and no range expansion was detected. They were reported north to Green Island and west to North Linn, Cedar Rapids, and Iowa City.

#### NOTABLE MISSES

There were a number of really big misses this season. This was the first count in more than thirty years that Long-tailed Duck wasn't found, made even more remarkable by last year's record ten birds. No scoters were found, a feat not matched since 2000-2001. Eastern Towhee was also missed for the first time in nearly thirty years. Counts also managed to miss Ruffed Grouse (for third straight year), Northern Mockingbird (first miss in 12 years), Gray Catbird (only 2 misses in previous 12 years), and Savannah Sparrow (just 2 misses in previous 15 counts). Other notable misses included Mute Swan, Common Loon, and White-winged Crossbill (7 of last 10); Blue-winged Teal, Snowy Owl, and Marsh Wren (6 of last 10); and Bonaparte's Gull, Prairie Falcon, Red Crossbill (5 of last 10).

#### UNCOMMON SPECIES

Despite the low overall species count we did have some really tremendous birds, any number of which could have been best bird on another count (Table 3). Number one on probably everyone's list was a Pine Grosbeak at Ames. It hadn't been on the count since 1996-1997. Historically rarer, but understandably underappreciated, was the appearance of a Baltimore Oriole in Burlington (the last count report was in 1997-1998). An Orange-crowned Warbler at Iowa City was equally unusual, although one had been found on the Green Island count just three years ago. An Iceland Gull was at Princeton for only the fifth time in nearly 30 years. Very unusual, Le Conte's Sparrows were found at both Burlington and Lamoni; Lamoni had six three years ago. A Horned Grebe was also at Lamoni. Interestingly, Chipping Sparrows were found at opposite ends of the state at Canton and Keokuk. More predictably, Yellow-headed Blackbirds were found at Sioux City and DeSoto NWR. A Turkey Vulture was at Keokuk, a Townsend's Solitaire was at Green Island, and Westfield got its Black-billed Magpie.

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Table 1. Site Data for 2014–2015 Christmas Bird Counts

Location	Date	Total		Field		Miles		Owling		Feeder		Temp		Snow		Wind
		Species	Birds	Obs	Pts	Hr	Car	Ft	Hr	Mi	Pt	L	H	Depth		
MISSISSIPPI RIVER																
1. Yellow River Forest	29-Dec	42	3,842	7	4	26.5	316	4.5	1	15	0	0	18	21	0	N 10-15
2. Dubuque	3-Jan	46	5,468	7	7	43.7	193	23.3	0.5	0.1	1	1	28	35	0.5	SW 5-10
3. Green Island	19-Dec	77	8,035	19	5	39.25	268.8	4.5	2.5	14	0	0	24	31	0	E 0-5
4. Clinton	16-Dec	75	12,602	13	5	41.75	333	2.5	3.5	29	1	1	30	43	0	NW 5-30
5. Princeton	18-Dec	72	9,166	8	5	41.5	352*	3.5	5.5	55	0	0	17	27	0	NW 0-5
6. Davenport	14-Dec	93	61,720	25	7	60	444	12.25	11.5	104	13	24.5	42	52	0	SW 0-10
7. Andalusia	24-Dec	73	7,282	9	4	32.75	277	4.25	6	50	0	0	34	37	0	N 0-15
8. Muscatine	23-Dec	71	6,737	11	5	43	383	11.75	5.5	37	9	8.5	40	45	0	SW 5-20
9. West Mercer County	26-Dec	67	9,995	10	5	38.75	302**	11.5	9	74	0	0	40	56	0	SW 5-20
10. Burlington	20-Dec	84	15,860	16	7	56	317	38	2	2	2	16	32	37	0	E 0-5
11. Keokuk	15-Dec	85	49,062	12	6	60	362	31	0	0	0	0	42	48	0	SE 8-14
MISSOURI RIVER																
12. Westfield	3-Jan	48	2,853	17	7	45	485	11	1.5	28	5	19.5	17	25	3	NW 5-15
13. Sioux City	20-Dec	66	27,189	21	10	67.75	748	24.25	3	3	3	8	32	34	0	SE 0-10
14. De Soto NWR	3-Jan	70	33,637	23	12	68.75	395	28.5	1.5	12.7	1	1.5	28	34	1	S 0-15
15. Omaha	20-Dec	64	10,165	34	15	75.05	476.9	28.4	0.5	4	1	2	32	34	0	SW 0-5
NORTHERN THIRD																
16. Decorah	27-Dec	49	8,098	17	7	43.75	339	18.75	0	0	10	14	22	32	0	NW 10-20
17. Bremer County	14-Dec	36	2,567	8	6	41	393	14	0	0	0	0	45	52	0	S 0-5
18. Worth County	1-Jan	40	6,438	6	3	26	233	13	0.5	5	0	0	10	28	2	W 5-15
19. Mason City	20-Dec	50	12,082	13	7	57	431	16.75	0	0	4	10.15	28	30	1	S 0-6
20. Union Slough NWR	2-Jan	36	2,132	15	na	38.5	373	6	1.25	15	0	0	na	na	na	na
21. Spirit Lake	14-Dec	53	9,051	13	4	98	278	6	0.25	1	6	7	49	54	0	S 10-15
22. Humboldt County	3-Jan	30	1,233	2	2	11	244	11	3	80	1	5	na	na	1	W 0-10
23. Cherokee	23-Dec	30	1,049	6	2	10	156	0	0	0	0	0	31	34	1	NNW 0-9
24. Canton	3-Jan	41	2,496	7	4	29.33	312.9	12.5	4.75	45.75	0	0	10	25	2.5	N 0-30

MIDDLE THIRD													
25. Lost Nation	17-Dec	58	6,023	13	5	40.5	510	8.5	2.5	na	0	0	19 23 0 NW 5-11
26. North Linn	27-Dec	56	10,166	6	3	26.75	330	1	1.75	12	0	0	28 32 0 NW 15-25
27. Cedar Rapids	20-Dec	65	13,096	17	9	55.5	289	9.5	1.75	14	1	4.5	28 38 0 calm
28. Iowa City	14-Dec	65	7,275	29	11	61.25	508	19.25	1.75	18	7	14	47 54 0 S 2-6
29. Cedar Falls-Waterloo	20-Dec	61	30,490	18	10	96	648	30	0	0	1	4	2 33 0 W 0-10
30. Eldora-Union	29-Dec	41	2,793	9	3	21	220.4	4.2	0.75	10	0	0	14 23 0 NE 5-10
31. Grinnell	20-Dec	29	957	8	4	18	40	8	1	0.1	2	8	30 34 0 SSE 4-8
32. Ames	20-Dec	68	34,321	38	17	101	372.25	43	8.5	38	8	19	27 34 0 SE 3-11
33. Saylorville Reservoir	14-Dec	89	53,313	25	10	82	673	28.25	10.75	78	0	0	49 56 0 ESE 2-9
34. Des Moines	27-Dec	63	18,549	16	7	40	352	18	1.5	55	5	15	29 34 0 NW 10-20
35. Neal Smith NWR	3-Jan	43	3,104	29	6	22	150	10	1.5	7	1	1	30 39 0 var. 4-10
36. SE Webster County	27-Dec	43	4,031	14	4	21	250	2	2	10	3	12	28 36 2 W 5-8
37. Boone County	3-Jan	55	7,981	34	16	94.5	515.5	42.75	6	42	15	49	23 39 0 var. 0-12
38. Jamaica	18-Dec	60	12,954	13	7	45.5	484	12	1.5	16	1	1	22 28 0 SE 3-7
39. Dallas County	21-Dec	32	7,034	5	3	21.25	225	8.7	0	0	1	na	37 41 0 S 0-10
40. Sac County	3-Jan	37	2,892	4	2	13.5	45	9	1	5	1	1	19 31 0.5 na
41. Ida County	27-Dec	38	1,397	15	6	31	179	20	1	3	1	2	19 23 1.5 NW 10-20
SOUTHERN THIRD													
42. Wapello County	19-Dec	35	2,483	3	1	7	75	0.5	0	0	0	0	28 32 0 N
43. Red Rock Reservoir	20-Dec	64	26,205	9	7	48	330	12	4	42.3	0	0	33 39 0 SSE 3-15
44. Rathbun Reservoir	14-Dec	60	8,587	9	4	37	375	4	3.75	65	9	12	47 53 0 S 8-15
45. Lamoni	20-Dec	63	5,036	8	4	35	402	11.25	0.75	3	0	0	28 34 0.5 S 0-5
46. Union County	23-Dec	62	12,692	5	3	23.5	277	5	2	14	0	0	28 39 0 NW 9-21
47. Taylor County	20-Dec	50	3,156	3	2	19.5	163	2	2	25	0	0	30 38 0.5 N 0-5
48. Shenandoah	20-Dec	65	14,993	14	7	45.5	363	10	2.5	12	6	10	31 36 0 S 0-15
TOTALS		131	598,287					*Includes 8 miles by boat.			**Includes 2 miles by kayak.		

Table 2a. Christmas Bird Count Data, 2014–2015

Location	Gr W-f Go	Sn Go	Cack Go	Ca Go	Tr Sw	Wo Du	Ga	Am Wi	Am Bl Du	Ma	No Sh
MISSISSIPPI RIVER											
1. Yellow River Forest				12					2	722	
2. Dubuque				1044					4	545	
3. Green Island	15		37	811	55					118	
4. Clinton	60		3	1911	130		16			370	
5. Princeton		2	12	1139	186	2		1	5	291	
6. Davenport	33		51	7880	1	8	4	4		941	
7. Andalusia			3	170		1			1	85	
8. Muscatine			12	431		1			3	470	
9. West Mercer County	1629	163	20	863			1		2	3254	
10. Burlington	126		38	9612	20		cw			84	
11. Keokuk	70		7	1546	34		12	1	4	1340	
Subtotals	1933	165	183	25419	426	12	33	6	21	8220	0
MISSOURI RIVER											
12. Westfield				150							
13. Sioux City	1	35	35	5889			5		2	14088	
14. De Soto NWR		1	98	12998	41	2				14741	
15. Omaha			11	2834	6					171	
Subtotals	1	36	144	21871	47	2	5	0	2	29000	0
NORTHERN THIRD											
16. Decorah			2	1667	2					225	
17. Bremer County				98						5	
18. Worth County			1	5265						12	
19. Mason City		6	190	7864						474	
20. Union Slough NWR						1				70	
21. Spirit Lake			41	4860	5	2	2			1241	
22. Humboldt County				424						32	
23. Cherokee										1	
24. Canton											
Subtotals	0	6	234	20178	7	3	2	0	0	2060	0
MIDDLE THIRD											
25. Lost Nation				227	10					18	
26. North Linn	25	7	218	5453					2	647	
27. Cedar Rapids		3	7	4093	37				3	815	
28. Iowa City	cw	2	4	1747						192	
29. Cedar Falls-Waterloo	1		25	13380	33			1	5	1976	
30. Eldora-Union				1592	14				1	66	
31. Grinnell				430	2					66	
32. Ames	5		223	11151	51					751	
33. Saylorville Reservoir	6		84	19403	10		2		3	16942	2
34. Des Moines		4	27	5386	78		3			402	
35. Neal Smith NWR				847						5	
36. SE Webster County	1		21	2034	5				2	718	
37. Boone County				403						9	
38. Jamaica		1	300	9720	5		4	3	1	1269	
39. Dallas County			23	6200						11	
40. Sac County				2000	11					40	
41. Ida County				254						17	
Subtotals	38	17	932	84320	256	0	9	4	17	23944	2
SOUTHERN THIRD											
42. Wapello County				540	cw					94	10
43. Red Rock Reservoir			32	4553			1		1	556	
44. Rathbun Reservoir		1	15	1188			1			2633	
45. Lamoni			12	685						9	2
46. Union County		11	65	7067						770	
47. Taylor County		100	3	401			3			694	
48. Shenandoah	7	667	66	3734			6	4		5675	2
Subtotals	7	779	193	18168	0	0	11	4	1	10431	14
TOTALS	1979	1003	1686	169956	736	17	60	14	41	73655	16

No Pi	Gr Wi Te	Ca	Re	Ri Ne Du	Gr Sc	Le Sc	Bu	Co Go	Ho Me	Co Me	Re Br Me	Ru Du	No Bo
1								1		106			
		13	3	3	10	9		71		919	2	2	
		855		10		339	11	481	4	770		14	
		31	9	1		28	2	58		1036	2		
3		33	14	47		160	44	1591	22	1670		5	
				4		3		125		238	1		1
						30		77		50	2		1
	2									4			5
	5	10		40	3	65	14	45	6	10		2	
1		10817	19	259	19	50	1	1670	40	314	1	3	1
5	7	11759	45	364	32	684	72	4119	72	5118	8	26	8
								1		1			
3	13	1		8		1		113	3	40			9
	22							24		29			
3	35	1	0	8	0	1	0	92	3	44	0	0	9
			2										
						3							
		2	11	5	7	2	7	92	1	68		4	
0	0	2	13	5	7	5	7	92	1	68	0	4	0
1								21		9			
2	2					1		cw	cw	21		1	
1		3	6	1		9		24	1	38		12	
3				1		1							
1	1			1		1							
5	2	2	4	4	5	71	1	280	3	4000	1		
1		1	4	8	1	4	1	216	11	33	2	7	
1				2									
		1	8	20		6		10		105			
15	5	7	22	37	6	93	2	551	15	4206	3	20	0
1				1		6		135	1	9890	4		10
						4		3		1086			5
3			2	21	1	16		132	1	17		1	
1	1		cw	73		4			1	4			
5	1	0	2	95	1	30	0	270	4	9	4	2	16
28	48	11769	82	509	46	813	81	5262	95	20515	15	52	33

**Table 2b. Christmas Bird Count Data, 2014–2015**

Location	Ri Ne Ph	Wi Tu	Pi Bi Gr	Am Wh Pe	Gr Bl He	Ba Ea	No Ha	Sh Sh Ha	Co Ha	Re Sh Ha	Re Ta Ha
<b>MISSISSIPPI RIVER</b>											
1. Yellow River Forest		33				122			2		27
2. Dubuque					1	28	cw		1		38
3. Green Island	2	14			1	291	8		2	2	74
4. Clinton	3	74		30	14	141	2		4		36
5. Princeton	7	8			22	194					42
6. Davenport	10	63	1	68	8	200	1	3	11	2	54
7. Andalusia	1	20			4	121	2	2	3	1	34
8. Muscatine	1	1		21	9	164	2	1	2		48
9. West Mercer County		8			1	94		2			27
10. Burlington	6	4		20	8	124	2	2	1		66
11. Keokuk		32	1	59	8	242	4	2	4		33
Subtotals	30	257	2	198	76	1721	21	12	30	5	479
<b>MISSOURI RIVER</b>											
12. Westfield	51	144				34	3	3	1		47
13. Sioux City	45	393			1	24		2	7		124
14. De Soto NWR	3	183			1	81	12		2		99
15. Omaha	1	76			1	60	7	5	3		104
Subtotals	100	796	0	0	3	199	22	10	13	0	374
<b>NORTHERN THIRD</b>											
16. Decorah	1	125				88	3		2		30
17. Bremer County	1	1				16	2	1	2		13
18. Worth County	8	38				4	2	2			17
19. Mason City	2	206			1	16			1		8
20. Union Slough NWR	159				2	8			2		11
21. Spirit Lake	7	55	1		1	4			1		8
22. Humboldt County	64					8					5
23. Cherokee	18	25				11					14
24. Canton	9	15				48			1		20
Subtotals	269	465	1	0	4	203	7	3	9	0	126
<b>MIDDLE THIRD</b>											
25. Lost Nation	8	31	1		4	94	2	1	1	2	38
26. North Linn	2	16			1	74					24
27. Cedar Rapids	1	54			2	39		2	5	1	33
28. Iowa City	5	39			2	45	8	cw	5		41
29. Cedar Falls-Waterloo	7	25				46		1	6	2	64
30. Eldora-Union	1	61				53					21
31. Grinnell		27				9					6
32. Ames	92	32	1		1	19	1	2	11		90
33. Saylorville Reservoir	17	18		4	2	97	3	5	4		50
34. Des Moines		22				90		2	4		35
35. Neal Smith NWR	10	21				15	2	cw			38
36. SE Webster County	1	13			1	28		2			11
37. Boone County	56	36			1	60	3	2	4		100
38. Jamaica	7	39				29	1	1			26
39. Dallas County	7	25				14	1		1		18
40. Sac County	7					16	1				20
41. Ida County	8					6			1		22
Subtotals	229	459	2	4	14	734	22	18	42	5	637
<b>SOUTHERN THIRD</b>											
42. Wapello County				cw		65	1	1	1		20
43. Red Rock Reservoir	26	38		59	1	228					20
44. Rathbun Reservoir	1	5		1	1	55	13	1	3		84
45. Lamoni	5	119				37	10	2	1	1	74
46. Union County	1	29				10	4	5	2		36
47. Taylor County	3	43				16	1				18
48. Shenandoah	6	54			7	11	4	3	2		43
Subtotals	42	288	0	60	9	422	33	12	9	1	295
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>670</b>	<b>2265</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>3279</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1911</b>



Ro Le Ha	Am Co	Sa Cr	Ki	Wi Sn	Ri Bi Gu	He Gu	Th Gu	Le B-b Gu	Ro Pi	Eu Co Do	Mo Do	Ea Sc Ow	Gr Ho Ow
13 cw 8 3									115 175 191 141	21 95 56 25		1 1 10 3	2 5 1 7
4 1 2 2 6	5 3	1 2 4	1 4	1	659 193 4613 985 55 31 648 1327	47 65 525 22 16 1 4 22	1	2	1301 179 83 38 183 604	1 435 410 105 96 261 156		4 9 5 5 4 1 3	27 23 14 13 2 2
39	40	7	6	2	8511	706	6	2	3440	48	1776	46	96
27 7 3 5	1	1							116 1116 168 319	18 254 12 26	7 8 8 18	7 1 2	6 4 4 3
42	1	1	0	0	43	0	0	0	1719	310	41	10	17
16 10 2 cw 1									191 210 158 444		2 14 1 58		2 2 7 4
3 8 10	108								196 78 58 265 262	23 22 2 15 17	6 2 6 6 20	1 2 6 10	4 8 2 6 10
50	109	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1862	100	109	10	42
2 5 2 1 4 3 1					1 50 39	7 6			51 24 653 198 1355 43 5		31 17 174 150 122 2 35	12 3 3 1	11 4 8 3 2 1
1 1 5 14	3 3 1 38				3 1641 15	4200 21	5	2	786 375 854 82 72 139 8 30 61 140	38 36 40 3 22 25 3 2 34	13 87 166 10 12 31 13 3 2 5	1 6 1 1 17 1 1 2 2	7 38 4 2 1 29 2 2 2
44	69	0	7	3	1750	4234	5	3	4876	226	873	49	119
7 7 5 4 1					136 6959 1000	12 950 16	5	1	587 49 56 111 72 87 41		12 4 42 90 2 25 116	2 8 5 2 1 2	17 9 6 3 1
24	135	0	0	0	8096	978	5	1	1003	230	280	20	41
199	354	8	13	7	18400	5918	16	6	12900	914	3079	135	315

**Table 2c. Christmas Bird Count Data, 2014–2015**

Location	Ba Ow	Lo Ea Ow	No S-w Ow	Be Ki	Re He Wo	Re Be Wo	Ye Be Sa	Do Wo	Ha Wo	No Fi	Pi Wo
<b>MISSISSIPPI RIVER</b>											
1. Yellow River Forest	1				2	45		41	6		10
2. Dubuque	3			6		56	1	104	25	5	8
3. Green Island	6			5		80	6	98	32	34	17
4. Clinton	1			1	14	53	4	57	10	23	
5. Princeton	4			5	17	54	1	72	16	17	6
6. Davenport	28	1		7	13	116	4	184	53	15	7
7. Andalusia	14	1		2	1	126	5	67	38	19	11
8. Muscatine	16			1	8	62	2	69	32	6	8
9. West Mercer County	11		1	1	11	69	2	56	20	17	19
10. Burlington	5			3	27	94	2	35	19	32	8
11. Keokuk	4			8		61	2	52	19	55	5
Subtotals	93	2	1	39	93	816	29	835	270	223	99
<b>MISSOURI RIVER</b>											
12. Westfield	3	2				32		54	18	14	
13. Sioux City	2			4	1	51		95	23	32	cw
14. De Soto NWR	7			3	1	56	3	88	24	13	2
15. Omaha	2			1	58	112		118	33	26	4
Subtotals	14	2	0	8	60	251	3	355	98	85	6
<b>NORTHERN THIRD</b>											
16. Decorah	4			1	2	53		59	33	3	8
17. Bremer County	3				1	13		37	9	2	3
18. Worth County		1				3		16	9		
19. Mason City	1		1		1	21		58	20		2
20. Union Slough NWR	2					9		16	6		
21. Spirit Lake				2		13		21	10	1	
22. Humboldt County	2			1		7	1	9	1		
23. Cherokee						2			1	2	
24. Canton	1	2	2			12		38	11	7	
Subtotals	13	3	3	4	4	133	1	254	100	15	13
<b>MIDDLE THIRD</b>											
25. Lost Nation	6			2	66	66	1	81	25	22	3
26. North Linn	7			1	7	38	1	32	10		
27. Cedar Rapids	7			5	5	86		183	24	13	9
28. Iowa City	3			1	18	63		81	26	12	4
29. Cedar Falls-Waterloo	5			6	4	66	1	61	28	3	7
30. Eldora-Union	1		1	4	2	34		32	8		5
31. Grinnell				1		5		12	2		
32. Ames	7			5		104		227	61	11	
33. Saylorville Reservoir	21	7	2	2	1	102	4	107	44	29	2
34. Des Moines	4			1		54	1	68	22	17	3
35. Neal Smith NWR	1				1	50		52	8	12	
36. SE Webster County						23		21	5	1	
37. Boone County	24			7	17	212	1	249	93	12	11
38. Jamaica	6	3		4	3	51		32	13	11	1
39. Dallas County	1			1		10		11	3	1	
40. Sac County	1			1		19		19	1	2	
41. Ida County			3			1		5		7	
Subtotals	94	10	6	41	124	984	9	1273	373	153	45
<b>SOUTHERN THIRD</b>											
42. Wapello County				cw		9		6	2	1	
43. Red Rock Reservoir	11			2	2	49		44	15	12	2
44. Rathbun Reservoir	6			2	7	65		93	7	10	2
45. Lamoni	6	10		3	2	43	1	44	7	29	2
46. Union County	2	2	1			20		19	6	33	
47. Taylor County	2				10	13		12	4	15	
48. Shenandoah	2	1			cw	26		23	4	14	
Subtotals	29	13	1	7	21	225	1	241	45	114	6
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>2409</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>2958</b>	<b>886</b>	<b>590</b>	<b>169</b>

Am Ke	Me	Pe Fa	No Sh	Bl Ja	Am Cr	Ho La	Bl Ca Ch	Tu Ti	Re Br Nu	Wh Br Nu	Br Cr	Ca Wr	Wi Wr
8			1	77	260		68	7		31	1		
8				117	137	3	275	28	5	68	24		1
16			1	158	205	1	162	38		95	12	2	5
12	2			111	759	7	219	34	1	67	10	1	
13				202	76	30	213	20	2	92	14		1
22		2		192	148	33	378	61	1	206	52	23	7
17				187	154	18	201	48	4	137	21	8	3
37		1	1	154	132	7	259	53		100	12	6	1
27				116	91	71	190	39		87	6	4	
34	2	3		201	127	15	110	54		56	6	14	4
21				83	21324	76	133	50	1	60	17	16	
215	4	6	3	1598	23413	261	2208	432	14	999	175	74	22
5			2	37	47	297	125			37	4		
12			2	73	88	3	150		1	103	4	3	
8			1	87	94	140	203	2	1	55	2	1	3
20		1	1	122	53	1	163	22	1	155	16	16	3
45	0	1	6	319	282	441	641	24	3	350	26	20	6
8			1	179	1100	11	142	13	1	81	6		cw
2	1		3	84	174		88			16			
1	1		4	52	171	11	16			11			
3	1		4	126	611	1	103			42	2		
5		1	2	24	222	27	7			3			
			1	25	82		77			29	4		
3				12	26	11	33			20	1		
2				5	203		4			1			
2	3		3	54	81	437	75			31	7		
26	6	1	15	561	2670	498	545	13	1	234	20	0	0
30			1	209	140	10	135	23	4	75	25		
21			2	45	263	70	80	9		32	7		
34				118	1681		402	45		71	16		1
24				120	294		266	61	1	79	7	2	
7				140	8923		212	1	2	56	2		
				36	89	8	37			19	1		1
1				10	22		15			10			
14	1		2	170	13150	7	579	2	2	211	41	4	2
14	3		2	178	794	8	286	22		120	17	3	
7	4		1	89	8500		185	24		90	1	3	2
2				54	209		72	1		43	1		
				19	74	2	43			23		1	
6			1	224	709		483	65	10	313	10	3	1
4			1	77	124		63	8		73	4		
5				6	57	2	17			6			
2				21	61	150	48			35			1
2			1	59	80	77	2		1	4			
173	8	0	11	1575	35170	334	2925	261	20	1260	132	16	8
3				84	46		22	9		6			
6	1		2	96	170	2	104	7		42	4	2	
29			1	186	186		106	31		34		2	
13			1	352	333		121	25		39	7	1	1
26	1		1	96	364		72			11			
10			1	65	59	14	17			32	3	1	
14	1			174	40	24	9	5		27	1	2	
101	3	0	6	1053	1198	40	451	77	0	191	15	8	1
560	21	8	41	5106	62733	1574	6770	807	38	3034	368	118	37

**Table 2d. Christmas Bird Count Data, 2014–2015**

Location	Go Cr Ki	Ea Bl	He Th	Am Ro	Eu St	Ce Vv	La Lo	Sn Bu	Ye Ru Vv	Am Tr Sp	Fo Sp
<b>MISSISSIPPI RIVER</b>											
1. Yellow River Forest		7		2	431	49				380	
2. Dubuque	1	26		79	560	12				247	
3. Green Island		101	3	82	1529	166	3	3	11	292	
4. Clinton	3	36	4	8	1123	25	25	25		144	
5. Princeton		16	4	1	1319	8	27	5	14	498	
6. Davenport	12	29	5	182	5225	133			4	184	5
7. Andalusia	11	25	1	33	823	51	13		4	270	4
8. Muscatine	4	4		25	2166	2		2		105	
9. West Mercer County	13		2	4	682	22	14	5	1	285	
10. Burlington	4	44	1	27	1019	74				243	2
11. Keokuk	3	121	1	144	6120	67	17		4	170	
Subtotals	51	409	21	587	20997	609	99	40	38	2818	11
<b>MISSOURI RIVER</b>											
12. Westfield		9		6	239		10			104	
13. Sioux City	3	16		54	2160	296	2			514	
14. De Soto NWR	3	23		35	648	61	18			1145	1
15. Omaha	3	95		130	2414	72				591	1
Subtotals	9	143	0	225	5461	429	30	0	0	2354	2
<b>NORTHERN THIRD</b>											
16. Decorah		12		5	518	1	2000	22		101	
17. Bremer County					537					374	
18. Worth County					44		1			44	
19. Mason City				1	650	10	100			68	
20. Union Slough NWR					787		27	11		59	
21. Spirit Lake				6	1253	116		1		108	
22. Humboldt County					193	5				30	
23. Cherokee				23	252		39	20		20	
24. Canton	9				206	158				134	
Subtotals	9	12	0	35	4440	290	2167	54	0	938	0
<b>MIDDLE THIRD</b>											
25. Lost Nation	3	2		1	1033	30		12		886	
26. North Linn	2	19		138	900	24	3	3		141	
27. Cedar Rapids	1	12	3	21	1508	156	3	1		178	1
28. Iowa City		52	1	57	1006	134				526	1
29. Cedar Falls-Waterloo				25	1938	29				208	
30. Eldora-Union					151		100			48	
31. Grinnell				1	95					47	
32. Ames	6	5		72	2820	32			2	603	
33. Saylorville Reservoir		45	2	75	916	323	20		2	833	2
34. Des Moines		20		44	548	83				81	
35. Neal Smith NWR		8		51	209	5				249	1
36. SE Webster County		1		1	135					18	
37. Boone County		13		12	2030	30				213	
38. Jamaica	2			1	223					106	
39. Dallas County					476					27	
40. Sac County					88					60	
41. Ida County	1			3	130		1	2		182	
Subtotals	15	177	6	502	14206	846	127	18	4	4406	5
<b>SOUTHERN THIRD</b>											
42. Wapello County		10		10	403	3				118	
43. Red Rock Reservoir	2	32		36	392	116				589	
44. Rathbun Reservoir		60		11	164	223			5	130	
45. Lamoni	3	148	1	126	613	217			4	477	
46. Union County	2	58		1315	1005	71			5	226	
47. Taylor County		71		87	301	60				271	
48. Shenandoah		1		70	1903	39				420	1
Subtotals	7	380	1	1655	4781	729	0	0	14	2231	1
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>1121</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>3004</b>	<b>49885</b>	<b>2903</b>	<b>2423</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>12747</b>	<b>19</b>

So Sp	Sw Sp	Wh Th Sp	Ha Sp	Wh Cr Sp	Da Ey Ju	No Ca	Re Wi Bl	me sp	Ru Bl	Br Bl	Co Gr	Br He Co	Pu Fi
5	2	4		3	545	83							10
13	1	2		4	429	69							30
4	20	8			523	188	355		3	1	15	16	51
13	11	4			422	163	2				5	1	3
80	43	127		2	677	172	289				8	42	3
28	8	70		1	669	355	23201		25		7011	199	40
15	1	3		5	593	239	75				2	46	53
30	2	11		2	449	178	26				11	71	25
21	22	19		10	505	211	326				4	3	4
60	9	14	2	3	514	212	41			30	1	11	26
269	119	262	2	30	359	239	168		11		4	9	2
					5685	2109	24483	0	39	31	7061	398	247
25			2		324	58	38	4	86	2			1
67	3	cw	42	2	459	78	122					13	4
42	1	14	58	33	847	202	404	246		1			cw
134	4	26	128	8	725	149	361	21	1				7
				43	2355	487	925	271	87	3	0	13	12
		1		3	443	144							21
		7			233	107							
		2	1		153	9	6		3			2	
cw					192	73	1		1				cw
4					22	2	1						
1					48	5	205					2	
1					87	15							
1					31	4							
					213	11							9
7	0	10	1	3	1422	370	213	0	4	0	5	2	30
17	9	2			425	183	25		2				16
2	1	12			403	92	1					403	13
10	2	22			579	226	2	2			3	3	5
22	1	19			507	256	5		1			3	1
3		6			358	152	17	1			2	1	
					155	37						8	10
		1			50	18							
40	1	36	2		860	253	100	3			1	9	10
53	37	78	4	4	641	208	5				3		5
3		15			433	166	1						
4		1			164	72	12		1		12	20	cw
			3		159	40						4	15
5		7	5		475	218	105				1		15
2	1	8			218	54	9	1		2	35		
1					14	2							
					112	16	5		30				
2		5			151	17					60		
164	52	212	14	4	5704	2010	287	7	34	2	117	451	90
31		2			99	62							cw
5	1	15	1	1	431	113						4	21
		5			218	81	95	1			1	50	6
7	1	2			403	94	140	2	2			5	17
10	2	2	5		339	69	83	7					85
1					277	24	310	22		4		18	
5	1	39	7	4	329	179	264	252	29		7		
59	5	65	13	5	2096	622	892	284	31	4	8	77	129
633	180	575	158	85	17262	5598	26800	562	195	40	7191	941	508

**Table 2e. Christmas Bird Count Data, 2014–2015**

Location	Ho Fi	Co Re	Pi Si	Am Go	Ho Sp	Eu Tr Sp
MISSISSIPPI RIVER						
1. Yellow River Forest	77		75	67	373	
2. Dubuque	239			192	761	
3. Green Island	95		9	130	720	5
4. Clinton	55		5	16	1810	
5. Princeton	87		4	210	922	59
6. Davenport	241	1	78	215	2075	160
7. Andalusia	144		87	94	1005	76
8. Muscatine	70		1	77	794	125
9. West Mercer County	3		2	112	402	250
10. Burlington	115		18	355	460	271
11. Keokuk	33		1	309	270	210
Subtotals	1159	1	280	1777	9592	1156
MISSOURI RIVER						
12. Westfield	17			123	536	
13. Sioux City	44		6	79	405	
14. De Soto NWR	8	1		195	328	
15. Omaha	25		cw	265	368	
Subtotals	94	1	6	662	1637	0
NORTHERN THIRD						
16. Decora	28		18	99	621	
17. Bremer County	6			38	437	
18. Worth County	19	25		21	296	
19. Mason City	115		6	92	490	
20. Union Slough NWR			34	12	361	
21. Spirit Lake	33			12	355	
22. Humboldt County	12				161	
23. Cherokee				4	69	
24. Canton	8			50	487	
Subtotals	221	25	58	328	3277	0
MIDDLE THIRD						
25. Lost Nation	69		2	247	1561	27
26. North Linn	40		2	4	787	26
27. Cedar Rapids	201		31	50	1349	3
28. Iowa City	66		17	122	845	44
29. Cedar Falls-Waterloo	90		30	46	906	
30. Eldora-Union	7		3	11	102	
31. Grinnell	8			16	60	
32. Ames	214		41	187	1135	
33. Saylorville Reservoir	83		6	197	570	
34. Des Moines	50		9	139	440	
35. Neal Smith NWR	22			26	646	
36. SE Webster County	2			10	495	
37. Boone County	26		66	162	1213	
38. Jamaica	8			13	164	
39. Dallas County					55	
40. Sac County	5	1	1	13	36	
41. Ida County	3			19	67	
Subtotals	894	1	208	1262	10431	100
SOUTHERN THIRD						
42. Wapello County	3			28	46	
43. Red Rock Reservoir	2	7		54	219	
44. Rathbun Reservoir	11			51	427	
45. Lamoni	9			157	346	
46. Union County	114		11	155	144	
47. Taylor County				17	13	
48. Shenandoah	119			25	215	
Subtotals	258	7	11	487	1410	0
TOTALS	2626	35	563	4516	26347	1256



**Table 3. Species reported on three or fewer Christmas Bird Counts, 2014–2015**

Species	Counts
Ross's Goose	Sioux City (1), Iowa City (2)
Tundra Swan	Green Island (2), Clinton (1, 144), SE Webster County (2)
swan sp.	Yellow River Forest (2)
C. Goldeneye x H. Merganser	Union County (1)
duck sp.	Omaha (33)
Gray Partridge	Ames (5)
Horned Grebe	Lamoni (1)
Double-crested Cormorant	Davenport (6)
Turkey Vulture	Keokuk (1)
Northern Goshawk	Canton (1), Iowa City (1), Ida County (1)
accipiter sp.	Omaha (1), Canton (1), Boone County (2)
buteo sp.	Canton (1), Boone County (1), Taylor County (6)
Golden Eagle	Green Island (1), Western Mercer County (1), Mason City (1)
raptor sp.	Neal Smith NWR (1)
Iceland Gull	Princeton (1)
Glaucous Gull	Davenport (2), Saylorville (2)
Short-eared Owl	Burlington (1), Lost Nation (3)
owl sp.	Boone County (2)
falco sp.	Boone County (1)
Loggerhead Shrike	Union County (1), Taylor County (1)
shrike sp.	Cherokee (1), Dallas County (2), Taylor County (1)
Black-billed Magpie	Westfield (1)
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Davenport (1), Western Mercer County (1)
Townsend's Solitaire	Green Island (1)
Brown Thrasher	Mason City (1), Jamaica (2)
Orange-crowned Warbler	Iowa City (1)
Spotted Towhee	De Soto NWR (2), Omaha (1)
Chipping Sparrow	Keokuk (1), Canton (1)
Field Sparrow	Green Island (1), Burlington (1)
Le Conte's Sparrow	Burlington (1), Lamoni (1)
Lincoln's Sparrow	De Soto NWR (3), Omaha (cw), Saylorville (1)
sparrow sp.	Neal Smith NWR (20), Ida County (20)
Western Meadowlark	Andalusia (3), Canton (5)
Yellow-headed Blackbird	Sioux City (1), De Soto NWR (1)
blackbird sp.	Canton (15)
Baltimore Oriole	Burlington (1)
Pine Grosbeak	Ames (1)

# Hooded Oriole in Story County

*Christy Eischeid and Stephen J. Dinsmore*



*Figure 1. Hooded Oriole at Ames, Story, 9 May 2014. Photograph by Christy Eischeid, IA.*

On the evening of 9 May 2014 Christy Eischeid was watching her Ames feeders and noticed an odd oriole. The bird was clearly an oriole because of the orange and black coloration and size, which resembled the Baltimore Orioles visiting the same feeder. This bird was a dull orange color, brightest on the head and breast; other regions of the body were a dull orange-yellow color. The bill was black with some gray along the cutting line, more than half the length of the head,

and strongly decurved. The bird had a distinct black mask and throat and the dark wings showed two narrow white wing bars. The back was dark-colored (but not black) with fine pale spotting. Size was similar to the Baltimore Orioles with which it fed. The combination of orange color, a pale crown, dark wings with two narrow white wingbars, and the shape and extent of the black mask and throat eliminates most other orioles. The most likely confusing species is a first-spring male Orchard Oriole, which lacks the orange color tones, is smaller, has a less extensive black bib, and has a less decurved bill. The dullness of the plumage suggested it was most likely a first-spring male Hooded Oriole. The bird returned to the feeders again on the morning of 10 May but was not seen thereafter. This represents the second record of a Hooded Oriole for Iowa, the first being a single on 25 May 2003 in Buchanan (Johnson, A. M. 2013. Records from the past: Hooded Oriole. *Iowa Bird Life* 83:166).

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# Iowa Ornithologists' Union Business Meeting

23 May 2015

The I.O.U. spring business meeting was held at Water's Edge Nature Center at Lake Smith Park near Algona, Iowa. President Paul Roisen called the meeting to order at 4:12 P.M. In attendance were Dennis Thompson, vice-president; Stuart Sparkman, secretary; Mary Beth Hunt, treasurer; board members Candace Havely, Gerald White, Tyler Harms, Keith Dyche, and Karen Viste-Sparkman, and members of the organization.

## REPORTS

**Secretary's Report:** President Roisen asked the body's permission to dispense with the reading of the minutes by the secretary. The body assented. Hank Zaletel moved that all minutes for the 22 August, 23 August, and 2 November 2014 meetings be approved as written. Rick Hollis seconded. The motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report:** Mary Beth gave a brief financial report and presented a balance sheet. The typical difficulty in comparing financial status from year to year was invoked again, noting that much depends on when the organization is billed, and when bills are paid, as well as the degree of regularity of publications. In addition, more of our expenses occur later in the year, so status in April is not always a reliable indicator of the state of our finances. President Roisen remarked that each of the past years show positive net income, despite I.O.U. continuing to donate around \$5000 per year to projects. Current financial information will be available to members on the I.O.U. website soon.

**Publications Report:** *Iowa Bird Life* is about one quarter behind in publications. The first issue for 2015 will be to the printer

soon. Photos from this year's spring meeting should be sent to John Bissell for publication in the newsletter. Much money is being saved by producing the newsletter electronically. Also, the recent move of the listserv to Google groups has saved us about \$500, and the transition was fairly smooth. The new updated version of the I.O.U. website will be launched within the next few days. It is much easier to navigate, and easier to access with iPads, smartphones, and other electronic platforms. The old version was difficult to navigate. Ann requested help from the members in a couple of areas regarding maintenance of the site. Local events must be entered on the calendar. She invited local clubs to choose someone to do simple updates for those groups. Also, she asked for help with a major update of the gazetteer of hotspots and other birding sites. The previous site accounts are woefully outdated and no longer accurate. "Hotspots" is a feature that will help people find these sites and know basic information about what to expect when visiting. Those that are eBird spots are tied into that system, so viewers can see eBird data from sightings at those places. She exhorts members to volunteer to get out in the field and update a county or two. Also, Ann asked for someone willing to be a co-web manager to remind people to post content and

keep posted material contemporary. At the conclusion of this report President Roisen asked members to thank Ann for all her work on behalf of the organization.

**Records Committee Report:** Paul Hertzell offered a report. He has recently replaced Ann Johnson after 14 years and around 1,650 documentations. Ann will remain on the committee to serve out the remaining three years of Paul's at-large seat. Paul also gave a short tribute to Ann and presented her with a token of appreciation. Chris Edwards completed his term, and Karen Viste-Sparkman has been appointed as his replacement. In 2014 the committee received 119 documentations of 81 distinct records, with 59 of these being reviewed and 49 accepted.

**Membership Committee Report:** Rick Hollis presented on behalf of Paul Skrade. The committee finally has a full complement of members. Rick expressed thanks to Pam Allen for her work as membership coordinator and welcomed Cecille Thompson as her replacement. Accomplishments of the past year include the long-awaited availability of the so-called Yellow Book. Copies were made available for purchase at this meeting. The committee requests ideas for more ways they can serve members.

**Membership Coordinator's Report:** President Roisen presented a report on behalf of Pam Allen. Membership is down, but there are over ten new members for 2015 so far, and it is not uncommon for members to lapse and then re-enroll late in the year. Pam reminds us that one-on-one contact is the best way to engage people and get them interested and involved in the organization.

**Projects Committee Report:** Tyler of-

fered a report. Twenty-one proposals were received, requesting a total of \$19,331. The I.O.U. fully funded three of these, and partially funded ten others. Information on projects receiving I.O.U. funding can be found on the website. Bery Engebretsen was thanked for his service as his term expires. The board of directors has approved Billy Reiter-Marolf to replace him. The committee has been exploring options for creating signs and stickers to indicate items or projects that the organization has helped to fund.

**Library/ Historical Committee Report:** Hank Zaletel requested another member for this committee. He invited members to visit the I.O.U. archives, housed in the Special Collections at the Iowa State University library. He also informed members of an I.O.U. Flickr account, which can be used to share photos on the internet. Hank announced his intention to provide a link from the I.O.U. website to stories and articles related to early Iowa bird history, Iowa ornithologists of past generations, and books about the same.

**Meeting Reports:** Dennis summarized the fall meeting in Ankeny. There were 108 attendees, and the organization took in more funds than it spent. The fall 2015 meeting will be held 29-31 August in Fort Madison. There are plans for next spring's meeting to be held in Ames.

## NEW BUSINESS

**Elections:** Mark Proescholdt presided over elections, as chair of the nominating committee. He thanked Keith and Paul for their service on the Board of Directors. Running for president were Francis Moore and Rick Hollis. Mark asked for additional nominations from the floor, but none were

offered. Each presidential candidate addressed the body briefly before the election. Francis Moore was elected by secret ballot. Unopposed on the ballot for a second term as vice-president was Dennis Thompson, and offered for board of directors were Gerald White for an additional term and Linda Rudolph for a new term. These candidates were elected by acclamation.

**Point of Privilege:** President Roisen

expressed thanks to the members for all the support he received during his tenure as president.

A motion was made to adjourn by Ann Johnson. A second was heard from Matt Stevenson. The motion carried, and the meeting was adjourned at 5:21 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,  
Stuart Sparkman, secretary

## Iowa Ornithologists' Union Board of Directors Meeting

22 May 2015

**The I.O.U. spring board meeting** was held at Water's Edge Nature Center in Lake Smith Park near Algona, IA. President Paul Roisen called the meeting to order at 8:18 P.M. Attending were directors Dennis Thompson, Gerald White, Karen Viste-Sparkman, Keith Dyche, Candace Havely, Stuart Sparkman, Mary Beth Hunt, and Tyler Harms. Attending as guests were Francis Moore, Ann Johnson, and Rick Hollis.

**Welcome:** President Roisen welcomed Rick and Francis as members contending to become the next president of I.O.U. He expressed thanks to Keith, Gerald, Pam Allen, and Bery Engebretsen for their services to the organization. He also expressed gratitude to Gerald and Dennis for their willingness to continue in service to I.O.U. beyond their expiring terms.

**Actions since last meeting:** On 11 December 2014 the board of directors approved two motions without opposition. The first appointed Eric Ollie to a five-year term on the Membership Committee. The second authorized the development and

distribution of a survey of current, former, and non-members to better understand recruitment and retention efforts.

### REPORTS

**Secretary's Report:** President Roisen asked for corrections or additions to meeting minutes from the fall meeting and from the November budget meeting. None were offered, and all minutes were approved unanimously without comment.

**Treasurer's Report:** Mary Beth gave a brief financial report. The typical difficulty in comparing financial status from year to

year was invoked again, noting that much depends on when the organization is billed, and when bills are paid, as well as the degree of regularity of publications. Hunt Associates had an unexpected issue that has left the report a few small details short, but this will be resolved shortly. President Roisen remarked that each of the past two years shows positive net income, despite the organization continuing to donate money to projects. He believes our finances are in good shape. Ann remarked that the publications enhancement fund helps even out the irregularity of publications expenses. Current financial numbers will be available soon on the I.O.U. website.

#### **Membership Coordinator's Report:**

A report submitted by membership coordinator Pam Allen presenting current and historical membership data was discussed. Membership continues to decline. The most recent new member numbers are low for the current year. Some suggestions received with the report were briefly discussed, but the topic was tabled for further consideration later. Discussion was heard in support of publicly recognizing new members as they attend their initial meeting and presenting them with a small gift from the organization. No decisions were made and no action was taken.

**Other Reports:** All other reports were deferred until the general business meeting on 23 May 2015.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**Website Overhaul:** Ann Johnson presented information about the launch of the new website. The old website will go down and the new one will be activated around 24 May 2015. She promises the new site will be

a substantial improvement over the previous version. It should be easier to navigate, and an additional advantage is that it will be more suitable for use with a variety of platforms- tablets, smartphones, and other devices, and thus more nimble than the outgoing version. Ann sees this new website as a web application for getting the word out to people about what our organization is and what we do. She wants many people involved in working on the hotspot/gazetteer portion of the site. Several in attendance remarked that the new site looked really good. Help is also needed from members in posting local events to the calendar. There was discussion about creating a *website content manager* so that Ann is not solely responsible for all of the various site changes. Discussion centered on the skills necessary for this task and whether volunteers could do this or someone would need to be hired. The board intends to communicate with the publications committee for suggestions for a person suitable for this position.

**Membership Committee:** Rick Hollis will present a report from this committee at the general business meeting.

**I.O.U. Survey Committee:** Tyler Harms and Paul Skrade have been working with a small committee on a membership survey authorized by the board on 11 December 2014. Significant progress has been made on the survey, and the project is now in the fine-tuning phase. A good list of questions has been produced, and the survey will be soon be ready for use, and will be distributed in a Google Forms format.

**Field Trips:** Eric Ollie will be involved in starting up this program. It is hoped that I.O.U. sponsored field trips will be an avenue for gaining new members. There is still some uncertainty about insuring these trip



and whether waivers should be necessary in offering these events.

## NEW BUSINESS

**Projects Committee:** Billy Reiter-Marolf was offered as a replacement for outgoing member Bery Engebretsen on this committee. Candace moved that the board approve this change. Karen seconded, and the motion carried. Tyler updated the board about signage. At a previous meeting the board determined that some of the projects we help to fund could be signed with our logo or otherwise branded in order to increase the visibility of I.O.U. as an organization. Samples were displayed that could be placed on physical structures such as bird blinds. Stickers that could be affixed to things like optics or field guides that I.O.U. might donate to a group were also mentioned, and there was brief discussion about cost. This presentation was informational, and no action was taken. Gerald asked whether grant recipients are reporting back to I.O.U. as the board requires. Tyler confirmed that this is occurring, and one such recipient will be presenting about a sponsored project at the general business meeting.

**Iowa Young Birders:** Tyler spoke briefly about Iowa Young Birders. The group will be focusing on membership in the coming year. Carl Bendorf has requested that the board of directors consider allowing electronic membership in I.O.U. for members of Iowa Young Birders. President Roisen remarked that this might be something we could try out to see what happens, and then it could be continued if we see positive results. Karen remarked that electronic membership would likely be desired by many of our current regular members, and thus offering this benefit to Iowa Young Birders but

not to regular members could be a problem. No action was taken at this time.

**Elections:** Elections for I.O.U. officers and directors will take place during the spring general business meeting on 23 May. Elections will be by secret ballot, with the election of president to occur first. As chair of the Nominating Committee, Mark Proescholdt will assist with the elections process. As per the by-laws, nominations from the floor will be accepted.

**Previous Meetings:** Dennis will present information at the general business meeting summarizing the financial impact of recent meetings.

**PayPal:** It was suggested that access to the I.O.U. PayPal account should be granted to the vice-president for facility in dealing with meeting registration fees and certain other transactions. This would relieve Ann Johnson from some duties that she should not be solely responsible for. Stuart moved to grant the vice-president said access. Tyler seconded, and the motion carried.

**Conclusion:** President Roisen thanked all present for making his tenure so productive and for excellent attendance at all meetings. The board of directors in turn expressed its sincere appreciation for all of the work and care President Roisen has given to the organization, and improvements and enhancements the organization has experienced while under his direction were noted.

A motion to adjourn was made by Tyler. Candace seconded, and the motion carried. The board of directors meeting was adjourned at 9:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,  
Stuart Sparkman, secretary

# Fifty Years Ago in *Iowa Bird Life*

*James J. Dinsmore*

The main article of the June 1965 issue of *Iowa Bird Life* was the report on the spring 1965 meeting held in Davenport in mid-May. The meeting was one of the largest and most elaborate meetings the IOU has ever held. It was a joint meeting with the Illinois Audubon Society with some 130 IOU members and guests as well as 121 members of the Illinois Audubon Society attending. That total of about 250 attendees must rank as among the most ever for an IOU meeting. Held at the Davenport Public Museum, an art exhibit featuring regional birds was on display for the attendees. The formal program included five talks on topics ranging from wintering hawks to African birds. Those talks were followed by a panel that discussed various issues related to the use of pesticides and their effects on birds. The banquet speaker was Dr. Alfred Bailey who presented a lecture and film on the Galapagos Islands. Field trips were held on the Illinois side of the river on Saturday and in Iowa on Sunday. Despite flooding of some low-lying areas, the field trips in Iowa yielded 144 species. At the annual meeting, the by-laws were changed, adding a fourth membership category for Life Members.

A second major article was a memorial written by Robert Vane that honored former President and long-time IOU member J. Harold Ennis who also served as Librarian for the club. Besides his many contributions to the IOU, Ennis, a sociologist by training, was on the faculty at Cornell College for many years and was active in the county conservation program and numerous other organizations.

The field reports provided a fairly full listing of sightings for most regular species but few rarities were reported. Yellow-crowned Night-Herons at Ogden and along the Raccoon River, two Whimbrels at Cone Marsh, and a Western Grebe at Big Wall Lake were some of the more unusual birds found. Among the short notes, Jerry Kaufmann of Loras College described his attempt to define the distribution of Ruffed Grouse in northern Dubuque County, using both counts of tracks in the snow and spring drumming counts.

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**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES** (renewable yearly): Fledgling (students) \$15, Institutional (domestic) \$30, Institutional (foreign) \$45, Goldfinch \$30, Bluebird \$35, Oriole \$50, Egret \$75, Osprey \$100, Bald Eagle \$250, and Peregrine Falcon \$500+. Membership dues entitle members to receive *Iowa Bird Life* and *IOU News* quarterly and to vote and hold office in the Union. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Join, give a gift, or manage your membership on-line at <[www.iowabirds.org](http://www.iowabirds.org)>. Paper forms for new members and renewals may be mailed to the treasurer. Back issues of *Iowa Bird Life* are available from Membership Coordinator Pam Allen, 7955 Wistful Vista Dr., #20, West Des Moines, IA 50266 (2birders@hickorytech.net).

**INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS:** Original manuscripts, notes, letters (indicate if for publication), editorials, and other material relating to birds in Iowa should be sent by e-mail attachment in Microsoft Word to editor. Research manuscripts should include abstract, introduction, study area, methods, results, discussion, and literature cited sections and will be sent for peer review. Accepted manuscripts will be published promptly depending on space available.

**Photos and graphics:** Submit only original, unsized, and unenhanced photos in your camera's JPEG (\*.jpg) format. Photos must be 300 dpi at the size they will be printed (6-1/2" wide by 6-1/2" high for the cover and various smaller sizes inside), so setting your camera to its highest possible resolution is recommended. The editor will do any resizing and enhancing required because any previous adjustments to the photos may make them unusable. Submit photos and graphics as e-mail attachments.

E-mail all material other than seasonal reports to editor at [cootjr@iastate.edu](mailto:cootjr@iastate.edu). Deadlines for submission are **January 1 for winter issue** (Vol. xx[1]), **April 1 for spring issue** [2], **July 1 for summer issue** [3], **October 1 for fall issue** [4]. Send seasonal field reports to field reports editors by deadlines listed on inside front cover.

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**CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT:** Deadline for receipt of reports is 15 January. For forms and instructions, contact Christopher J. Caster, 1813 Liberty Lane, Coralville, IA 52241 ([cjcaster@q.com](mailto:cjcaster@q.com)).

**BIRD SIGHTINGS:** Subscribe at <[www.iowabirds.org](http://www.iowabirds.org)>

**ADDRESS CHANGES:** Update your on-line profile at <[www.iowabirds.org](http://www.iowabirds.org)> or send address and e-mail changes to Membership Coordinator Cecille Thompson, 7503 Wildflower Ct., Johnston, IA 50131 ([cndthomps@acm.org](mailto:cndthomps@acm.org)).

**UPCOMING MEETINGS OF THE IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION:** Spring: 13–15 May 2016, Ames.

**FRONT COVER PHOTO:** Harlequin Duck, Des Moines, *Polk*, 3 January 2015. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.

**BACK COVER PHOTO:** Rough-legged Hawk, Iowa Arboretum, *Boone*, 6 February 2015. Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA.

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